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A
PRESERVATIVE
Against the
False Prophets of the Times:
Or, A
TREATISE
Concerning
True and False Prophets,
With their
CHARACTERS:

LIKEWISE
A LETTER to Mr. *Maximilian Misson*,
upon the Subject of the Miracles, pretended
to be wrought by the **FRENCH PROPHETS**,
and their Adherents; particularly that of the
Fiery Tryal, pretended to be wrought by
CLARY, in the *Cevennes*.

ALSO
REMARKS concerning the Impostor
HERMAS, Author of the *Sybilline*
Verses, the *Fourth Book of Esdras*, and the
Book called the *Pastor*.

By *Mark Vernons*, a French Minister.

LONDON;
Printed, and Sold by *J. Morphew* near *Stationers-*
Hall, 1708.

THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

BY

JOHN BURNET

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

IN TWO VOLUMES

LONDON

Printed by J. Streater, at the

Sign of the Sun in St. Dunstons Church

1679

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A PRESERVATIVE against The False Prophecies

Of the T I M E,

O R,

A Treatise concerning True and False
Prophets; with their Characters.

S E C T. I.

*Of True and False Prophets, represented in a
full and just Character of them, drawn from
the Holy Scriptures.*

THE Office of the Prophets, under the
Dispensation of the *Old Testament*, was
to support the Intérest of the Law
of God, against the Rebellious Peo-
ple and Disobedient Kings; to employ vigo-
rously, as occasion required, the Heat of lively
exhortations, the Power of Censures, the Al-
lurements of Promises, the Terror of Threat-
nings, the Authority of Rules, and the Force
of Examples, to restrain Men within the Bounds
B of

of the Will of God, prescribed to them ; or to oblige them to return to their Duty, by Motives to a serious Repentance, and happy Reformation of Life.

The Gift of Prophecy, consisted in acquired Knowledge; but acquir'd with such a degree of Light, as had more of Divine than Human in it, and which qualify'd them to pass for Persons Inspir'd, enduing them with a Faculty of Expressing and Publishing that they knew, either by word of Mouth, or Writing, for the Benefit and Safety of the People, and for the Glory of God ; and that with such a Courage, as was not to be daunted at the Prospect of the Dangers to which they expos'd themselves, and which wou'd not give way to the opinionative Obstinacy of hardned Hearts. But tho' their Employment was properly to declare the Will of God already revealed, and as it were, to sound in the Peoples Ears the same Trumpets that had been heard with so much Fear and Trembling upon Mount *Sinai* ; yet God, for a farther Testimonial of his Favour, and for the Edification of his Church, oftentimes vouchsafed to grant them some Ray of a new Revelation, relating, either to the present or future State of Things, either within or without the Church, either to some particular, or to the universal Church, that is to say, all the Elect People of God, without Exception. And because, amongst the various Graces which God was pleas'd to honour them with, that of of Foreseeing and Predicting future Events, was the most Wonderful, and the most Divine ; it was therefore from hence, that they

they receiv'd their Denominations, and were
 call'd Prophets, because they cou'd predict what
 shou'd one Day come to pass. It is true, there
 is yet another more important Reason, which
 render'd the sacred Title of Prophet more pro-
 per for them, than either that of Preacher, or
 Rabbi, or Doctor of the Law : and that was, that
 the Law, whereof they were the Heralds and
 interpreters, was not given on any other De-
 sign than to lead Men to *Christ*; I say, to *Christ*,
 who was not yet come, and who made the
 Church earnestly expect and long for his Com-
 ing : So that Religion, of which the *Messias* la-
 bouring in the Work of our Salvation, was al-
 ways the Principal and Glorious Object, had
 then its Prospect turn'd towards future, as now
 it looks backward upon the Times that are past;
 and we may say, in a very just sence, that Faith
 which is always *the Evidence of things not seen*,
 was properly before the Incarnation of our Sa-
 viour *Jesus Christ, the Substance of Things hoped*
 for; whereas it is now more properly the Sub-
 stance of Things that are come to pass. It was
 then in Prediction, what it is now in the Histo-
 ry; which the Church searches and finds to be
 the Foundation of her Hopes, the Source of
 her Consolations, the Subject of her Triumphs,
 the Author of her Eternal Salvation. Pro-
 mising was therefore then the most dear and
 precious Treasure of the Faithful, and it is now
 the Gospel, that is to say, the good Tidings
 and Appearance of the Saviour of the World,
 and of that which he has done and suffered for
 the Love of us, and for the obtaining of Eter-

nal Happiness for us. Hence it is, that the Ministers of Truth have ceas'd to bear the Name of Prophets, at least in the Sense that we use it in this Place ; that *John* the Baptist was more than a Prophet, because he pointed to, and discover'd as present to the Eyes of the Auditors, him, whom, before that, they cou'd only see at a distance with the Eyes of the Soul, and through the Veil of Futurity ; and that the Disciples of that great Teacher of the Church, receiv'd the Name of Evangelists and Apostles, that is to say, the Bearers of good Tidings and Messengers.

This grand future Blessing, upon which the ancient Church had always her Eyes fix'd, was likewise reveal'd before the Law was given upon Mount *Sinai*. But the All-wise God, according to the course of his admirable Wisdom added from Time to Time, new and clearer Degrees of Light to his first Revelations, for the greater Consolation of the Church. As we have but an indistinct view of a Man, when we behold him at a Distance, but if we approach near to him, we can distinguish more clearly the Air of his Face, the Colour of his Habit, his Gait, the least thing that he has about his Feet, or that he holds in his Hands : So God was willing that his first Elect, and faithful Servants, who were removed from their Redeemer by a long space of Time, shou'd be contented to know him, only as their Saviour ; but when his Elect had pass'd over some Part of this long space, God made a Discovery to them of some Particulars relating to him, and which he had never yet discover'd ; as for Instance, some

Circum

Circumstances of his Birth, Life, Death, and glorious Resurrection.

God dispensing his Light by this Measure, to the end, that the Knowledge of the *Messias* might advance with this Order, Prophecy was not plac'd before the Eyes of the Propheer, as a Torch for him to view distinctly his Object from Head to Foot; but the Prophet was enlighten'd by it, as by the Glimmering of Lighting, which does not stand fix'd before us, and which discovers to us, without any Order, sometimes the Face of a Man, sometimes the Feet, and sometimes his Arms, and which surprising, makes us see suddenly, in a Moment, without Order, what we do see. So the Prophet David, in the 22 *Psalms*, saw, as in a Night made clear with several Tracts of Light, our Saviour *Jesus Christ*, opening his Mouth, and piercing the Air with this Cry, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me.* And again, as were by the favour of another Flash of Lighting, he sees a little after, the Nails that pierced his Feet. Another makes him discover the *Soldiers*, that part the Garments of the Lord, and cast them upon his Vesture.

This supernatural and wonderful manner of seeing future things, makes them often speak of that which is future, as of a thing really come to pass. And this they did, either because they had a sudden Seeing, and on a sudden Publish'd what appear'd to them, as by a True and sincere Enthusiasm, avoided troubling themselves to examine, and make such Reflexions upon it, as were necessary to distinguish a Prophetical Vision

sion from an ordinary Sight, the Functions of Eye of the Mind, from the Functions of that of the Body, and likewise to discern the Circumstances of the Time ; or because they seeing at a Glance, and then being immediately depriv'd of the Vision, the Light which had enlighten'd them being on a sudden withdrawn, were possess'd with an Idea, as of a Thing that ceases to be, and consequently of a Thing that has really happen'd ; and this is the Idea which they discover in their Words, which are the external Representations of the internal Images imprinted on the Mind.

That we may comprehend these Truths the better, we ought to consider well what the Doctors in the School of Philosophy, and the Doctors in the School of Divinity teach us *viz.* That there are two kinds of Speech, the one Internal, and which continues within us, the other External, which goes out from us, the one is the Thought ; the other is the Expression : the one is in some manner Spiritual, the other is invested with a Body, and strikes the Senses : the first is in the Mind, the Image of such Things as Reason forms in her when she conceives them, as the natural and immediate Production of the Understanding ; and the second owes its Original to the material Organs which form the Voice, and render it articulate. And with respect to this alone, St. Paul teaches us in his Epistle to the Romans, *that out of the abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaketh.* So Zacharias being filled with the Holy Ghost, was enlighten'd with an internal Light wherewith he was possess'd, and

him speak as a true Prophet. It is this same inward Speech that strikes the Heart of *Samuel*, the Prophet cries out, from a Sense of the inward Light and Impression made on him, *speak Lord, for thy Servant beareth*. And all the Prophets divinely inspired make use of this Expression, *thus saith the Lord*, when they declare his Will to Men; and in many Places of the Holy Scriptures it is said, *that the Voice, or the Word of the Lord came to them*. Upon which

Gregory makes this excellent Commentary in his *Morals*. *When God makes himself, he instructs the Heart by his Speech, without employing Words or Syllables; his Discourse without Noise, which opens the hearing; and the Heart understandeth not the Sound*. Lib. 21. cap. 7.

Let us add, to what we have said, this farther Truth, that there is a considerable Difference between the ordinary Sight, and a Prophetical Vision, which is the Subject before us. The Difference consists in this, that the Eye of the Body cannot see a remote Object but by an Interval of Space, which separates it from him; that, he do's in Truth see it, but at a Distance, viewing at the same time the extent of Space which causes the Remoteness of it. Whereas Prophetical Vision at the first Glance meets the Object that is presented to it, and discerns it, without discerning the Space that is betwixt them. Now that which ones sees present to him, if he speaks of it after it has been present to him, makes him speak of it quite differently from what he wou'd do of a Thing to come. So those who by long Experience, by refined Conjectures

of Policy, and by a subtil Force of Reasoning apply themselves to read Future Events in past Transactions, as we say, do not see things in the same manner that Prophets do. For before they can be able to see them, it is necessary that their Prospect wander over a thousand different Places, and that they direct it to a thousand Objects, through Millions of Turnings and intricate Windings, and that they consider with the utmost Attention and Application of Mind, the various Movements of an infinite Number of Wheels, and Springs, upon which the Event depends, which they undertake to foresee with so much Violence done to themselves, so much Care, Industry, Eagerness and Pain.

Gregory the Great, a Follower of *St. Augustin* explains as he has done the Reflexion of *Job*; *Lo! my Eye hath seen all this, my Ear hath heard and understood it.* When any thing is perceived and heard, if it is not so discerned by the Understanding, it is undoubtedly no Prophecy. For *Pharaoh* saw very clearly in a Dream what was to come to pass in *Egypt*; but because he did not understand the Interpretation of his Dream, he was no Prophet. *King Belshazzar* saw very well the Character which the Hand writ upon the Wall; but was no Prophet, because he was not able to comprehend the Sence of the Writing. When therefore *Job* testifies that he had the Spirit of Prophecy, it was not because he had seen or heard, but because he assures us that he had a clear and distinct Understanding of what he perceived. It is for the same Reason that

Chap. 13.
v. 1.

Abbot *Rupert* saith, that the Apostle *St. John* con'd not be qualified for the Name of a Prophet, if it had been only in the Spirit that he saw what he relates to us, and if those Ideas had been only presented to his sight, without reaching his Understanding ; for this wou'd neither have been Revelation, nor Knowledge, nor Prophecy, nor Doctrine.

For this reason Pope *Gregory* distinguishes Prophecy in general according to three different Times, past, present and future. We ought to know, says he, that in the two first Times, Prophecy loses its Name ; because though Prophecy be rightly so called, when it represents Things future ; yet when it speaks of past, or present, it bears no longer that Denomination, and is no more than a History, not representing Things future, but relating what is past, or present. Prophecy is rightly so called in Reference to these Words of the Prophet *Isaiah*, *Behold a Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son.* But notwithstanding what *St. Gregory* says, Prophecy is also justly so called, when the Spirit speaks of what is past, *In the Beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth.* At the same time the Spirit tells us, that Man which now Subsists, had not then a Being. When Prophecy relates to what is present, it is, *when the hidden things of the Heart are made manifest.* In all this we ought to observe, that Prophecy is rightly so called, not only because it predicts Things that

In Mor. Lib.
11. c. 12.

ch. 7. v. 14.

Gen. 1. v. 1.

1 Cor. 14.
25.

that must come to pass, but likewise because it brings to Light the Things that are kept secret.

But let us return to the Question, why the Prophets commonly speak of a Thing future, as of a Thing already come to pass? After that God had poured his Light upon the Hearts of his Prophets, not simply making use of them as of a Trumpet, which understands not the Sound that it gives, and knows not the Matter which it publishes; I say, after that God had endued them with a Knowledge of what was to come to pass, it is he himself that Explains himself by the Mediation of their Organs, and speaks thro' their Mouth; and we ought not to wonder if God speaks of that which is Future, as of that which is past. For there is nothing Future in Respect of the Spirit of God; the Darkness is Light with him; he calls the Things that are not as if they were; that which is the most remote from our view, is as present to him, as the nearest Object we can look upon. Thus the Stripes of our Saviour were represented to him as already done, when he published that Prediction to the Church, *ch. 53.* as it is in *Isaiab.*

Having thus spoken of true Prophets, and of Prophecy in general, our next Business is to establish the Order of Prophets, by beginning with the Patriarchs, *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.* For when God manifested himself unto them, they were also Prophets. But from the Death of *Jacob*, and *Joseph*, till the time of the Mission of *Moses* there were no Prophets; and when *Joshua* and his Cotemporaries were dead, the People

fell into Idolatry, and every one did that which
 was right in his own Eyes, according to the Phrase
 of the Scripture. Gideon made an Ephod, and
 placed it in his City, and this became an Occa-
 sion of falling away, and Idolatry to the People.
 So that the Succession of the Prophets was not
 continual, and uninterrupted, their Ministry
 was not ordinary, and their Order was not al-
 ways in Being. In the Book of Judges, I find
 no more than one Prophet, and one Prophetess.
 It is true, the Two Tribes had an uninterrupted
 Succession of Pastors; they had the Holy Place,
 where they were permitted to offer lawful Sa-
 crifice; they had the Temple of Solomon, where
 God had promised to take up his Habitation,
 and which he wou'd sometimes visibly fill with
 his Divine Presence, and Glory; they had the
 Ark of the Covenant with all that it contained,
 the Precious Relicks of the Wonders of God in
 the Wilderness, the Urim and Thummim, the
 Gift of Prophecy annexed to the Sovereign
 Priesthood, even till the time of our Saviour.
 This grand Series of Prophets were sent one after
 another, predicting with Assurance what shou'd
 shortly come to pass. After these first Predicti-
 ons they were inspired with others, which also
 happen'd, others again with other Prophecies,
 and all of them together with the Prophecy of
 Prophecies. The Virgin Mary, Mother of Jesus
 Christ, Elizabeth, Anna, Simeon, and John Bap-
 tist acknowledged him by the Spirit of God;
 and from Samuel to Malachi, there had been a long
 Succession of Prophets, and the last Prophet
 Malachi

Malachi finishes his Ministry with telling the Jews to be mindful of the Law of *Moses*.

An Apostle in commending the ancient Prophets, observes their Divine Office, God at sundry Times, and in divers Manners spake in Times past unto the Fathers, by the Prophets; at sundry Times, that is in the time of *Abraham*, of *Isaac*, of *Jacob*, of *Moses*, of *Joshua*, of the Judges, of *David*, of *Solomon*, and other Prophets, of *Hagai*, of *Zachariah*, of *Malachi*; in divers manners, that is in the Day, in the Night, by Inspirations, or by audible Voices, sometimes by Dreams, and sometimes openly; for before the Time of *Jesus Christ* Oracles had ceased.

In the time of *Ezekiel*, the manner of the Prophets divinely inspired, was commonly, at least very often, to render their Prophecies more sensible and intelligible to the People; this was done first by some symbolical Actions, or such as were Figurative, and appeared as so many Enigma's; afterwards by an Explication which they gave to those Enigma's, to the End that the Action and Explication might together make a deeper Impression upon the Mind. God commands his Prophet to represent by visible Figures a City and a Siege, in order to predict that of *Jerusalem*; again he commands him to lie down in the Presence of the People a certain Number of Days, adding, *that according to that Number of Days, he shou'd bear the Iniquity of the House of Israel*.

It must be acknowledged that in some extraordinary Cases God has given his Spirit of Prophecy

hecy for one time alone, as in Case of an E-
 lection to some extraordinary Office; and by
 his visible Testimony of his Spirit, he shewed
 that he confirmed their Election to that Office.
 Thus it is said in the 11 Chap. of *Numb.* in Re-
 lation to the Seventy chosen Men of the Elders
 of *Israel*, that God put upon them a Part of the
 spirit which *Moses* had received, and that as
 soon as the Spirit rested upon them they Pro-
 phesied; but then they did not continue to do
 so: so that one cannot prove from thence that
 they were regular Successours; and by conse-
 quence we cannot place them in the Number
 of Compleat Prophets in all the Rules of Pro-
 phesy.

Miracles joined with Prophecy prove the
 Truth of it. Ordinary Miracles were at all
 times confirmed by other Miracles, extraordi-
 nary and new. Scarce had the Idolatrous Altar
 been Erected in *Betbel*, till a Man of God came
 to Denounce utter Destruction against it, and
 to demonstrate the Truth of his Commission and
 Prophecy he curbed the Insolence of *Jeroboam*,
 by causing his Hand to wither in the midst of
 an impure Sacrifice. *Elijah*, *Elisha*, and many other
 prophets succeeded afterwards: by their Words
 they open'd or shut Heaven, to make sometimes
 Rain, sometimes Fire to descend; they cou'd
 command Nature; they cou'd Multply the
 Oyl and the Meal; they cou'd Cure Diseases,
 and Raise the Dead.

SECT.

S E C T. II.

Of false Prophets, in opposition to those that are true.

IT is well known, that God gave to the Children of *Israel*, some Rules by which they might be able to distinguish very justly between a true, and a false Prophet. This was the Principal Rule given them; if there shou'd arise any one that shou'd pretend to have the Gift of Prophecy, and shou'd entice the People to serve strange Gods, or not to walk in the Way of the Lord, which he had prescrib'd to them, they were not permitted to hear that pretended Prophet, and were likewise Commanded to put him to Death, without any Respect to the Wonder he might perform, how surprizing oever the might appear. And therefore to know and distinguish rightly who are true Prophets, we ought to apply to them the Rule of the Law, to see whether all the Characters which were to be met with in the *Messias*, promised by *David*, *Isaiab*, *Jeremiah*, *Daniel*, *Zachariah*, *Haggai*, *Malachi* and others, are to be found in the Words of the Modern Prophets, since this is undoubtedly the Mark, End, and Scope of all the Prophecies of true Prophets.

The Holy Scriptures furnish us with a great Number of Examples of True Prophets, and False, those of whom it is said, that God himself sent amongst them a lying Spirit. Some of the

em we may observe, particularly *Balaam*, to
 whom, upon some particular occasions, God was
 pleased to Communicate some important Truth;
 in Order to have his Name glorified by the
 Mouth of his Enemies. Some of them we ob-
 serve, endued with a Portion of this Spirit of
 Prophecy, by a sort of Right adherent to their
 Office, and not to their Person; such was *Cain-*
an, when without knowing what he said, like
 a Trumpet pronouncing what it does not un-
 derstand, he uttered the Sum of all Prophecies,
It is necessary that one Man die for the whole People.
 Some of them lastly we observe, whom the Spi-
 rit of God seized upon, if we may use that Ex-
 pression upon occasion, for some small Time,
 and that rather to make himself perceived of
 them, than to declare any thing to them;
 such were the Messengers of *Saul*, and *Saul*
 himself amongst the Prophets.

St. *Chrysostome*, who has writ excellently well
 on this Subject, presents us with two differ-
 ent Pourtraictures, the one of a True, the other
 of a False Prophet. He says, that a True Pro-
 phet behaves himself in all that he says, with a
 clear and regular understanding, he preserves a
 great Gravity in his Comportment, appearing
 in a just Moderation, Sobriety, and Modesty
 of Mind. This is quite otherwise in a False
 Prophet. 'Tis his peculiar Mark of Distinction,
 to be disordered in Mind, to suffer the Violence
 and Necessity of obeying the Power of a Spirit,
 which draws and agitates him after such a man-
 ner as makes him appear distracted. It is the
 Command of God to enlighten, and to cause
 such

such things to be spoken as are intelligible to the Mind of him that pronounces them : it is the Property of the Devil to cause Disorder, to possess with Fury, and to utter things that are Dark and Obscure. The Prophets whom God moves to Prophecy are of a Sweet, Humble and Modest Disposition, and speak nothing but what is inspired into them by the Holy Ghost he himself; who is the Sovereign of all things, their Instructor; he infuses into them Wisdom enriched with a Spirit of all Knowledge; a Spirit which is one, but divided into many Parts; it is Subtil, Eloquent, Active, without Blemish, Certain, Assured, Sweet, a Lover of Good, Beneficent, Courteous, Kind, Constant, Sincere, Possessing within it self all kind of Virtues sufficient for all: Whereas False Prophets speak with a Turbulent, Disquiet Mind, because they are not able to bear that Motion that Agitates them with so much violence.

We read in *Lactantius*, that the Ancients sacrificed that, in Order to be filled with the Spirit of God, one ought to be possessed with Madness and confound the Pronunciation of Words. It was the Error of *Montanus*, that the Prophets were Fools and Madmen, that they spoke without knowing what they spoke, that their Words were confused and irregular, and that they were thrown out at Random. Upon which *Basil the Great* assures us, that it is a horrible thing to think that the Presence of God puts a Man out of his Senses.

Let us hear St. Peter upon this matter, *We have also a more sure Word of Prophecy, whercunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a Light that shineth in a dark Place, until the Day dawn and the Day-Star arise in your Hearts. Knowing this first, that no Prophecy of the Scripture is of private Interpretation: For the Prophecy came not in Old Time by the Will of Man: but Holy Men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

2 Pet. ch. 1.
v. 19 20, &c.

If then in the Time of the Apostle St. Peter, there were very bad Men, against whom the Apostle moved by the Holy Spirit, denounced a just Judgment of God, as appears by these Words, *which have forsaken the right way, and gone astray following the way of Balaam, the Son of Bozor, who loved the Wages of Unrighteousness, but was rebuked for his iniquity; the Dumb as speaking with Mans Voice forbad the Madness of the Prophets.* And if St. John the Divine, who writ after St. Peter makes mention of the Sin of Balaam, speaking to the Angel of the Church of Pergamos, who suffered the Balaamites to be with him, *have a few things against thee, because thou hast them there that hold the Doctrine*

Rev. ch. 2.
v. 14.

Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a Stumbling Block before the Children of Israel; the Words of St. Peter and St. John are writ for all Ages. So amongst us there are those that intrude themselves and pretend to be Prophets, or Favourers of the Prophets, following the Way of Balaam, and casting a Stumbling Block before the Children of Israel, are not they guilty of the same crime as was Balaam, that False, Wicked, and

Covetous Prophet. And if by a Spirit of Divination, such as was in the Damofel Ch. 16. v. 17. mentioned by St. *Luke* in the *Acts*, which brought her Masters much Gain by Sooth-faying; we in like manner see some Masters employing these their Instruments for a Sordid Advantage; is it not to be hoped that God will one Day repress the Folly of these Prophets and their Masters, who cast so great a Stumbling-Block before the Children of *Israel*? Were not the St. *Peter* and St. *John* Apostles? and have not Reformed Churches both of *England* and *France*, the Doctrine of the Apostles and the Authority of Censures?

They will say to us without doubt, you lie under a great Mistake, this a downright Calumny which you charge us with, without Reason and very unjustly; we have already made it appear, and have acquitted our selves of it. If they are either the Admirers or Authors of certain little Book which they endeavour to get dispersed amongst Families, the Leaves of which are, as those of *Sybilla*, filled with the impendable Obscurity of a Criminal, artful Nonsense to seduce the Weak, to gain Profelytes, to drain the Purses of Credulous Persons, whose Minds are entirely addicted and devoted to an Enthusiastical Bigottry. I say again, if they are either the Disciples, or Masters of an altogether new, and if they all of them act in concert together to prepare their gross Delusion before they appear upon the Stage to Act them and bewitch the Eyes and Minds of the Credulous People, who commonly run after a

child

thing that is new and surprizing, I am no way surprized at it. I have heard and read of a certain Impostor called *Harmas*; who had read *Plato*, and who imposing upon a great many Persons, Composed himself alone the Fourth Book of *Esdra*s, the *Sybilline* Verses, and the Book of the Pastour; so that he had sooner than can be imagined, corrupted the whole Country with them, and made his own Chimerical gross Fancies pass, as being intermixed with the Philosophy of *Plato*. I am willing to believe that these able Masters, these superiour Spirits, these learned Men have been likewise prying into the Philosophy of *Plato*, who was of Opinion that every one has a Demon to assist him, to watch over him, and not only to be the Witness of his Actions, but also of his Thoughts, and that it has its Residence in his Conscience. They may be able likewise to tell us something that is very Curious and Surprizing, as having turned over *Jamblichus's* Book of Mysteries, especially Sect. 9. where they are told that this Author, disputing at large concerning Genius's and Demons, proves that the Demon of *Plato* is not distributed by Virtue of the Horoscope, by the Position of the Stars, and by that which Astrologers call the Lords of the House; but that when the Soul is United to the Body, that Union which they call Generation, is the Demon that ought to preside over the Life of the Man; which Conducts the Soul and Unites it to the Body, after which it presides over those Parts that it has United, it inspires Thoughts into it, endues it with a

Power of acting, excites the Man to the Performance of his Duty, and so continues Master of him till the Soul, by a Course of Holy Magick, is put under the Conduct of God himself. Then the Demon goes and stays there, and submits it self to the Deity that has taken Possession of the Soul. The *Platonists* only allowed of one Demon to every Man, and called it the good Demon: but others attributed two, the one Good, the other Bad,

Quisque suos patimur Manes.

says *Servius* upon these Words of the Sixth Book of the *Æneids*. They meant that in every Man there is one Genius opposite to the other, and by the Good Genius they understood right Reason, which excites the Man to do always that which is best; and the Bad Genius, is no other but a depraved Concupiscence which would draw him into Evil. It appears that our new Prophets, by the assistance of their Masters, believed that they were possessed of a large share of the Good Genius, and that from time to time they are animated by it, and conducted through all the Degrees of their Prophecies, in so much that they utter their Oracles to the Honour and Profit of their *Apollo*, stiled *Pythian*, to whom is attributed particularly, under that Name, the Power of Divining, and uttering Oracles. Under the Law there were some Scandalous Persons, who bare Rule over those Spirits of *Python*, of Sooth-saying, under another Name, which was that of a familiar Spirit, as it is

men-

mentioned by Samuel, that a Woman had a familiar Spirit. The Hebrew 1. Sam. ch. 28. v. 27. has another Word for it, viz. *Elitim*, or *Ittim*, or *Ob*, signifying thereby Wise-men, or those that pretend to Divination: this was often the Work of the Devil, who had his Ministers and Priests, under whose Government these Spirits were placed, and who made Merchandize of their Oracles for Money.

I my self particularly know, and am assured, that a Young Woman who was possess'd of a familiar Spirit, and who was very fond of those new Prophets, often solicited her Husband to take into their House in London one of the Cere-
monial Prophesiers, telling him, that this would be a means to make his Family flourish and prosper. As she was the Daughter of a Minister, who died some Years ago in a Heresie, to the great Scandal of our Churches, she had without doubt heard him say, that he had certain familiar guardian Spirits in the House where they lived, and so through gross Ignorance, she look'd upon this pretended chosen Prophet, as a tutelary God. A Wicked Blasphemous Thought, and worthy of Death according to the Law!

Not after those that have a Spirit of Divination, when a Man or a Woman shall have a Spirit of Divination; for because they have in them, or about them, a familiar Spirit, ye shall cause them to die Death. I observe, that they mix Pagan with Christian Thoughts, but I do not know what sort of Infatuation and Stupidity; and by this means, without considering it, they enter into

that horrible Sentiment of the Intercessions of Demons.

St. *Augustin* observes, that *Plato* attributes to *Socrates*, upon occasion of his familiar Spirit, this Opinion, that every Demon is somewhat between God and Mortal Man, and that his Office is to be an Interpreter betwixt them. On the Part of Man he is to present his Prayers and Sacrifices; and on the Part of God, he is to deliver his Commands and Recompences. By this means, is conveyed to us whatever relates to Predictions, Sacrifices, Inchantments, the Art of Divination, and Magick. Since then the Spirit of Prophecy is a sort of familiar Spirit upon this account, it was believed, that in all Domestick Affairs it ought to be looked upon as a God, who had a Virtue altogether Celestial, for the Protection and Defence of those who Reverence the Power of it.

The Word *Pytho*, is taken from the Similitude of Bottles filled with Wine, or some Liquor, in Order to express the manner in which the Demon renders his Prophets and Inchanters Swelled and Bloated. The Word is Profane, it signifies Madness: and in Effect the Action of a Man or Woman that Divined, was all Rage and Distraction. *Virgil* gives us a horrible Description of it in some Parts of his Works especially in the Sixth Book of the *Aeneids*,

*Ventum erat ad limen, cum Virgo poscere fata,
Tempus ait, Deus, ecce Deus, cui talia fanti
Ante fores subito, non vultus, non color unus,
Non compta mansere comæ, sed pectus anhelum,*

*Et rabia fera corda tument, majorque videri
 Nec mortale sonans, afflata est numine quando
 Jam propiore dei, ---
 ---- Gelidus Teucris per dura cucurrit
 Ossa tremor. ---*

This Description of *Virgil*, may be not improperly apply'd to our Modern Prophets, in Regard of the Violence of their Prophetical Actions. I have seen two or three, or more of 'em together, who would pass for Prophets, who notwithstanding appeared altogether like the Prophets of *Apollo*, both in the manner of Prophesying, and in their Bodily Gestures ; and had nothing in them like true Prophets. No sooner had the Spirit seized them, but they were all over in a Flame ; and they might very well say,

Est Deus in nobis, agitante calescimus illo.

The violent Motions and Contortions which the Spirit caused , look'd as if they were prepared before-hand, to be practiced at Pleasure ; their Countenance changes, and is no longer Natural ; their Eyes roll after a ghastly manner in their Heads, or they stand altogether fixed ; the Members of their Body seem displaced, their Hearts beat with extraordinary Efforts and Contortions ; they become Swelled and Bloated, and look bigger than ordinary ; they Beat themselves with their Hands with a vast Force, like the miserable Creature in the Gospel, cutting himself with Stones ; the Tone of their Voice is stronger than what it cou'd be Naturally ;

rally ; their Words are sometimes broken and interrupted ; they speak without knowing what they speak , and without remembering what they have Prophesied. Now, what horrible Blasphemy is it to ascribe all these Disorders to the Spirit of God, who is a God of Order, and who dwelleth neither in the Whirlwind, nor the Earthquake, nor the Fire, but in a Sweet Calm and Still Air ? What can be therefore said, or thought of that which tends so little to the Advantage of Edification of the Church : certainly we cannot attribute these unnatural violent Methods, to any other than some Spirit which is not of God, or to a certain Art of which some Men make Profession, to seduce and deceive the Simple and Credulous. These are the Wits of the Crafty, and the Tricks of Juggiers, which belong properly to Cheating Knaves, that Practice them Publickly to get Money.

The Devil has made his utmost Attempts to Multiply Error and Idolatry in the World in establishing the Use of Oracles, Divination and Prophecies. The most Ancient and Famous Oracles were those of *Jupiter Ammon*. These the Devil caused his Answers to be delivered upon a Tripod to those that consulted him, which were generally Equivocal and Deceitful. And again, on their Part the Priests and Impostors abused the Credulity of the Pagans, by their Ambiguities and Illusions which were no less Captious and Sophistical. The wisest and most enlightened amongst the Pagans, the *Peripateticks*, *Cynics*

Eucl.

and *Epicureans*, Publickly laughed at, and despised all these Oracles, as meer vain Fancies of deceitful Spirits. An Observation very well becoming reformed Christians. The World was filled with Women possessed, who were concerned in these Predictions. We find in the Verses of the *Sybils*, ample and authentick Testimonies concerning the Trinity, concerning the Birth of *Jesus Christ*, his Death, Resurrection, Ascension, and the last Judgment. And this might be done either because the Providence of God had given some special Commission to the Devil, to deliver these Mysteries, as was the Opinion of *Bellarmino*, *Baronius*, *Hyperius*, *Bucanus* and others; or that the Christians had inserted these Verses in their Writings out of a Pious Fraud, and Good Intention, which Opinion *Casaubon* maintained against *Bellarmino*; or it might be that *Hermas* himself was the Author of them, whose Name is mentioned by *St. Paul*, and afterwards by *Blondel*. It is a Common Opinion that these Verses were burnt by *Stilico*, under the Reign of the Emperour *Honorius*. The greatest Part of the Pagan Oracles, ceased a little before the coming of our Saviour. The Poet *Lucan* gives this Reason for it, that the Kings being afraid of the Predictions which they cou'd make to them, concerning Future Events, imposed silence upon their Gods, and prohibited them to speak. Our Modern Prophets have disobeyed the Commands of those Kings; on the contrary they have renewed the Use and Practice of these Oracles. If *Minucius Felix*, in his Book called

called *Octavius* ascribes the silence of the Pagan Deities to this, that Men were become more Learned and Understanding, and consequently less credulous, which caused *Demosthenes* to say, that he was not ignorant of the Cheats of those pretended Oracles; we may likewise say that all good Christians, being now better instructed than they were in some Ages past, laugh at the Cheats of these poor ignorant People. And if *Minucius Felix* tells us, that the *Pythian* Goddess *Philippized*, meaning that she spoke as King *Philip* pleased; we can likewise say, that our Impostours have temporized, and in many things conformed themselves to the Humours and Manners of the leading Men amongst them. Let us add to all this, that the Oracles and Demons also having lost much of the Power and Credit, at our Saviour's coming into the World, as *Porphyry* complains in *Eusebius*; and if the Poet *Lucan* in the fifth Book of his *Pharsalia*, laments this loss in Pathetical and very moving Terms, our Age, says he, cannot receive a greater Damage, or be deprived of a greater Gift of Heaven, than to see the *Pythian* Oracles cease since the Kings, fearing to receive from them some fatal Answers, have prohibited the Gods to speak; it is not here a Poet, but a Courtier, a Mathematician, and a Beau, a Creature of an amphibious Nature by Profession, who laments the Misfortune of the Age, as if it cou'd not receive a greater Damage than in seeing the Oracles of *Marion*, *Fage* and *Cavalier* cease in siding with, and going over to the Quakers, an Anti-Christian Sect of People. He that knows any thing

ing of the History of Christianity cannot be ignorant, that upon the Preaching of the Gospel by the Apostles, the Oracles ceased, and destroyed themselves, as may be seen in the writings of *Strabo*, *Juvenal*, *Plutarch*, *Celsus*, *Athenagoras*, *Julian* the Apostate, and many others. Is it not the same Gospel which the Ministers, the true Successors of the Apostles, preach at this time? If there are therefore some of these new Prophets, ought not they also to be put to the test, that there may be a free Course given to the Word of Life, to the Gospel of *Christ*, which is the Power of God to Salvation, to all that believe?

To shew yet more fully the Impertinance and Absurdity of the Prophecies of our pretended Prophets, I shall observe, upon what *Servius* has already told us, concerning the two *Demoni*, or *Servius's* the one good, the other bad, the latter of which, pushes one always forward to Misery, that which is very much like what *Cardinal Bona* has said; our Age do's not want some of these dismal Tragedies, under a pretence of Revelations, invented by some of our Novels. He adds, these wonderful Illuminations of those enlightened Persons, who seduce People by Apparitions and Revelations of the Devil, precipitate them into the depraved Desires of the Flesh, and the most base and shameful Actions, who notwithstanding, give themselves the precious Names of Persons endued with a Divine Light; we should only discover too much wickedness if we shou'd produce an instance of a Person, who is capable of wishing that such

abominable Actions might pass under the name of the Holy Ghost, and who makes his Boast that he is all over possessed of a Divine Light when he has no other Revelations, no other Apparitions but those which the Devil presents to him. This wou'd be a very rare Instance if it were no where to be found but among our modern Prophets. We are told, that without either Vision, or Revelation, or Divine Light, but perhaps in a Rapture and Extasy one of these Prophets pushed on by a Spirit of Concupiscence, leaped from his Bed, and, as if he were all over possessed, accosted a young Woman in a Prophetical manner, who gave him a bold Repulse. The Prophet being ashamed returned to his Bed, without prophesying to the young Woman any longer. We ought not to be surprized if, after this Misfortune, he believed it to be his Duty to imitate the Prophet *Hosea*, by a pretended Revelation from Heaven in joining himself carnally to a Harlot.

S E C T. III.

Of Prophetical Extasies.

LET us now enquire into the Nature and Effects of Prophetical Extasies, as far as they relate to our Prophets. An Extasy puts

that is Sick of a violent Distemper out of Senses. The Physicians call it

Catboke, or Catalepsis. Fernelius

Sennertus gives us a full Description, and Galen some instances

it. *Nam correpti omni motu &*

seu destituuntur, ac in eo situ quo de-

hensi fuerint, rigidi & immobiles manent, apertis &

oculis vigilantis figuram retinentes, licet omnis

suum functio consopita sit. Galen produces an

Instance of one of his own Scholars, *Facebat*

ut lignum prorsus inflexus atque extensus, videbat-

oculis apertis non intueri, ut ne conuinceret quidem,

nil tamen loquebatur.

Some Philosophers, in defining Extasy, tell us,

that the Soul is really separated from the Body,

at every moment that the Man is in a Rapture,

and that the Soul returns again to the Body, as

soon as the Extasy is over. They

give as an Instance of it of one *Erastus*

Erastus, who is mentioned by

Erastus, and *Maximus Tyrius*. They tell us, that

he was without Action, and as one Dead, but

on the Soul returning again to the Body he

was restored to Life, and that afterwards he

was made of the Rewards and Punishments of the

after Life. But this is none of that kind of Ex-

traneous which are to be met with in our Prophets.

They are possessed with a Species of Madness,

and Fury, accompanied with various Motions and

Agitations, and most violent Strugglings, like to

what wherewith the Devil moved *Saul* in a way

of besetting, and seizing, as far as God in his

and secret Judgment would permit him.

If

Fernel L. 3. c.

2. Seneri Instit.

medic. L. 2. part.

3. Sect. 1. c. 9.

Galen. com. 2. in

1. 1. Hipp. c. 168.

56.

L. 10. Rep.

Serm. 28.

If they pretend to prove that these are great Motions, I shall always keep my Judgment on the Reserve, and shall not yield to a thousand presumptive Reasons which prove nothing.

An Extasy causes many different Effects in Man that is surprized with it. Sometimes it affects the bodily Senses, in such a manner that they are suspended between the Inactivity of the Faculty, which they call *the Sentiment*, and the Privation of their natural State. The Imagination likewise is often so weakened, that it is no longer the Liberty of forming that which they call *Thought*, which is properly the Production of the Understanding. Lastly, an Extasy causes such a Disorder in the Reason, that a Man knows neither what he thinks, nor what he do's ; and though his Life is not quite extinguished, yet his Organs, his Faculties, and all his natural Powers are held in a kind of Suspence. *Thomas Aquinas* says, this may proceed from three different Causes ; from a corporal Cause, from a spiritual and supernatural cause, the Power of a *Demon*, and by the Operation of God. This last, was the cause of the Rapture of St. Paul. *whether in the Body*, says he, *or out of the Body cannot tell, God knoweth.* But no Conclusion can be drawn from this Instance, no more than from the Extasies, Raptures and Visions of *John*. It is a great Piece of Rashness to pretend to any Advantage from it. Before one should have the Boldness to boast of it, he ought to have some Reasons for the same Privilege that the two Apostles had, by an Evidence of some favour from Heaven clearly revealed to them, that there was no Room left for doubting. T

senses may be affected, the Imagination may be weakened, and the State of Man may be like to that of the Queen of *Sheba*, who beholding the wonderful Grandeur and Magnificence of the Court and Palace of King *Solomon*, and the Wisdom of his Person, the Scripture tells us expressly, that *she had no more Spirit in her*. Who that rash Man, says *St. Augustin* that will dare to say, I know, when *St. Paul* says, *I do not know*?

*St. Aug. L. 12.
de Gra. 1a. ch. 1.*

Let us again hear *St. Augustin*

concerning the Subject of an Extasy; he tells us of the Soul of a

*De Civ. Dei. L.
14. c. 22.*

certain Priest of *Calamus*, who when he pleased wou'd deprive himself of all his Senses by a cunning Art he had learned. He wou'd lay flat upon the Ground as if he was Dead; if they dragged him along with Violence, if they pricked him to the Quick, he cou'd make a shew of feeling nothing, not even when they burned him in the Flame. Being returned from his voluntary Extasy, if any one cryed to him very loud, he wou'd pretend he heard a Voice come from afar. Such is the Practice of Knaves and impostours, who bewitch the Eyes and surprize the Minds of a Credulous Multitude who run after Novelties. Cardinal *Cajetan* speaks excellently well of those that are not true

Sc. 22. Art. 3.

prophets: It is evident, says he, that being fall'n into an Extasy they speak in the Name and Person of *Christ*, as if *Christ* himself made them act and speak, without mentioning any thing of those by whom they are produced, and who seduce others. Norwithstand-

ing

ing the foolish ignorant World admire them seem all over astonished, and are ready to adore their very Words, their Actions, and Persons.

St. *Jerome* against *Pelagius* has writ, that Heresies were invented and dispersed, by the Care and Assistance of Women. He reports that *Simon Magus* composed his Heresy, by the Assistance of *Helena*, who was his Concubine; and that *Montanus*, assisted with the Endeavours of *Priscilla* and *Maximilia*, corrupted many Churches, and many other rich Women, by infecting them with his Heresy. *Tertullian* himself gave too much Ear to their Delusions, being ravished with the deceitful Pomp of their false Prophecies. So true is it, what Cardinal *Bona* says That there is no Pestilence more dangerous, no Poison more mortal, than to give Attention to Visions and Prophecies. Hence it is that some very learned Men, who have been some of the Pillars of the Church, have fall'n away, being ravished with such specious glaring Lies, which only influenced their Imagination. Among the ancient Fathers of the Church, there was not one of them that have a more Illustrious Character for Wisdom and Reputation, than *Origen*. His penetrating Wit, his profound Knowledge, his admirable Eloquence, his Sanctity of Life, have rendered him the Admiration of all Ages, and gain'd him the pompous Title of being the Lamp of the Church. Notwithstanding being puffed up by the natural Pride of his Genius, he threw himself into an Abyss of Heresies, being charmed with Visions and

Prophecies which were vain, unprofitable, scandalous and false, and by consequence far from the Spirit of God.

There is an Account given by *Comenius* a Bp. of *Bohemia*, of three false Prophets, with some surprizing things concerning them, which notwithstanding deserve the utmost Contempt. It is of *Philip Cotterus* of *Sileſia*, *Chriſtina Poniotouski* of *Bohemia*, and *Nicolas Drabicius* of *Moravia*. Theſe three pretended Prophets boasted to have had frequently Viſions of Angels, and of God himſelf. They agreed amongſt themſelves to predict the Downfal of the Antichriſtian Empire, as if it was immediately to be accompliſhed. But, ſays a famous Doctor of that Age, there are ſo many surprizing things to be met with in them, that one cannot tell what Judgment to form concerning them. The Concouſe of ſo many obſcure Prophecies of an uncertain doubtful Origin, cauſes leſs credit to be given to them. To me, ſays the Doctor, it is inconceivable how an ignorant Mechanick cou'd imagine ſo great things, without the Aſſiſtance of God. Notwithſtanding we muſt not relie upon them. Let them draw what Conſequences they pleaſe from theſe falſe Prophets, in favour of our modern Prophets; we do not oppoſe them, we give them leave, provided the Conſequences they draw be in a juſt Senſe; Time having already ſufficiently manifeſted the pretended Prophecies of theſe three Prophets, to be a mere Deluſion and Falſehood.

It wou'd be unjuſt after this to place in the ſame Rank with *Iſaiab*, *Daniel*, and the Apoſtles,

D

theſe

these Phanaticks ; a Name the most favourable that can be given them. We cannot, without doubt, upon this Foundation, treat them as purely and simply Prophets, and as divine Men : We must do Justice to all the World. If they declare to us the Accomplishment of some great Matters, they ought to be preceded by a Concourse of Prophecies, dispersed some Time before over all Parts of the World, as we see done a little before the Time of Christ's Nativity : To find these modern Prophets to be such, they ought either to find or make some Prophets before them. They pretend there have been such, it is true, but they were of such a Kind, as no body ever imagin'd before themselves. They ought to be Prophets sent from God to instruct us : But if this Concourse of Prophets be compos'd of this New sort of Prophets, we cannot receive Visionaries for true Prophets.

If they pretend now, to speak of a Time mark'd out for the Destruction of *Babylon*, for the Overthrow of the Tyrannical Empire of *Antichrist*, for the coming of the Son of Man, and for the last Judgment ; these are Points of Prophecy, which no Body ever yet could find out, not even the Angels, nor the Son of Man himself. With what Compass, with what Balance, by what computation of Arithmetick or Algebra can they Measure, Weigh, or Calculate all these Diversities of Places and Times ? If a Man was a second *Archimedes*, and shall triumph upon a Discovery of this nature ; I dare affirm, he does it only upon a vain groundless Imagination.

Let us argue yet farther with this learned Mathematician, let us acknowledge to his Glory, that being one of the most profoundly skill'd in these Sciences of all his Contemporaries, he has obtain'd to the greatest Capacity and Perfection that the Mind of Man can arrive at, by long and serious Examination of all the Parts relating to them. Thus much may be granted him. But if it be said, that all his Demonstrations are most clear, most solid, incontestable and infallible, his whole Life can scarce suffice for that Purpose. Since then, in human Sciences, whatever surpasses the Light and Capacity, wherewith the Generation of Mankind are endu'd, does require so vast, difficult and laborious Study and Enquiry; it will be always the Part of a Prudent Man, to say, after all his Labour, This appears to me to be so, I may be deceiv'd. Without doubt, it is much more difficult, after the most long and laborious Researches, to say, not only this appears to me to be so, but to speak nothing under Infallibility, to say, *it is so, and it is impossible to be otherwise*, when at the same time, he is giving his Judgment concerning a Modern Prophet, concerning whom, he pronounces in a magisterial decisive Language, *I am sure it is the Spirit of Prophecy that speaks with his Mouth.*

If another Man, who is a great Philosopher, and intimately acquainted with the Writings of Aristotle and Descartes, wou'd carry Matters so far, he wou'd pass the Bounds prescrib'd him by these Masters, who were much wiser than he. For the most confident Ways of Speaking, that

Aristotle uses, are almost always such as these, it may be, it appears so or so, may it not be? it is not impossible but the Thing may be thus. *Theophrastus's* first and dearest Disciple, never speaks any other Language but this. Such is the Certainty of most of those Sciences, that are purely human. There is a Possibility, a great, a very great Appearance of Truth. Can we therefore say of the Knowledge of our Modern Prophecies, that it is a Certainty entire, compleat and absolute? We ought to Examine it very well first. All the Instruments of Mathematicians, all the Reasonings of Philosophers will signifie nothing to this Purpose; they can never qualifie a Man to speak in this Form;

I am assur'd, I cannot be deceiv'd, I can Swear and I do Swear, and Protest before God, and every Thing that is Sacred, that I could observe nothing which can make me believe, or suspect, that Elias Marion was not sincere, or, that what he said, was the Effect of any Distemper, Imposture, or Vision of a Mind possess'd with the Devil, or of a Juggle prepar'd before-hand. I do swear, that I am perfectly convinc'd, not to say I know of a Certainty, that was truly the Spirit or Angel of God that spoke by the Mouth of Elias Marion for the Time he was possess'd. So help me God.

John Daudé.

Omnino jurat. 1 Die April, 1707.

coram

N. Facio.

Richard Holford.

Charles Portal

S E C

S E C T. IV.

*Of the Knowledge or Examination of Modern
Prophecy.*

THE Consideration of *Saul*, looks like an Instance in which one cannot be deceiv'd. If we are oblig'd to place him in the Number of Gods Prophets, we must likewise admit those into the Rank of true Prophets, who at this Time pretend themselves to be such. If we consider well the Action of the Prophet *Samuel*, who by the Order of God, anointed *Saul* to be King over *Israel*, and the Words which the Prophet spoke to him, shewing him from God, in all these Circumstances, what he shou'd do, *Thou shalt meet, says he, a Company of Prophets with Psaltery, and a Tabret, and a Pipe, and a Harp before them, and they shall Prophecy, and the Spirit of the Lord shall come upon Thee, and thou shalt Prophecy with them, and shalt be turned into another Man, for God is with thee*; if we consider the Import of the Word, when it is said afterwards, *That he Prophefied*, that is to say, that he imitated the Prophets, that he had a Mind to be like them, and that he was no more than a Counterfeit Prophet, for after this, it is said, *That he stript off his Clothes, and in the Presence of Samuel lay down naked all Day and all Night, and that an Evil Spirit seized Saul, and he Prophefied in his House*: I say, if we consider these Things, we cannot allow him the Name of a true Prophet.

These Circumstances may serve to Instruct us, that a Prophet ought to be very well Examined, before we can justly attribute to him that Title. 'Tis a Matter of very great Importance, and deserves a serious long Examination, even according to the Rule prescrib'd us by Moses. *When a Prophet speaketh in the Name of the Lord, if the Thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the Thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the Prophet hath spoken it presumptuously; thou shalt not be afraid of him.* It all the Circumstances or Characters related of *Saul*, are not to be met with in our Prophets, we may observe others, which, tho' different from those of *Saul*, sufficiently intimate to us, and qualifie us to pronounce, *That the Lord hath not spoken to them: that if they speak, it is presumptuously, and therefore we ought not to be afraid of them.*

This Rule of *Moses*, is without doubt very good, and the Use of it extremely necessary, apply'd with due Care. For if the Knowledge of Prophecy is so difficult, that it surpasses the Comprehension of the Mind of Man: It Men of the greatest Learning, Experience, and other Abilities, have often confess'd their Mistakes and Ignorance in this Matter, when they have before thought themselves secure in the Judgment they had form'd; it is not to be doubted, but the Devil has constantly his Prophets and Dreamers, which is the cause of this Confusion. If *Saul* asketh ought of the Lord, he neither answers him by Dreams, nor by the Sacrifices, nor by the Prophets: But if God himself speak to *Aaron*, or *Miriam* his Sister, he says, *If the*

be a Prophet amongst you, I will declare my self in a Vision, or speak to him by a Dream. When the Devil wou'd speak to his Prophets, he moves, and disturbs their Imagination, and afterwards, sometimes discovers to them some secret Matters, which he only knows Naturally, and by long Experience. The Devil has no Power to enlighten the Understanding of Men ; he rather casts them into the most palpable Darkness : It happens, that sometimes he suggests to them in a profound Sleep, some Things, which they may practice when Awake : If they are Sick, he plays upon their Fancies with agreeable Delusions, as he did once to a Sick Person, moving him to go to the Temple of *Æsculapius*, promising to shew him there some Remedies for his Distemper. The Sick Person accordingly waited all Night for the Accomplishment of this diabolical Suggestion.

But by what Measures shall we know that Word which the Lord shall not speak to the pretended Prophets ! I answer, first, That that Word, either respects the Prophet, or the People, to whom the Prophet speaks it. Now, I say indifferently, in respect to both, that three different and altogether contrary Causes, do produce different Effects upon these different Subjects, and that whether they act separately, or sometimes all three together, when they meet in the same Subject; and these are the Devil, Nature, and God himself. Now 'tis a difficult thing, not to be deceiv'd ones self, and not to deceive others. The Devil has his Inspirations ; Nature has its instincts and Ideas ; God has his Illuminations.

The Devil takes Care to diffuse his Darknes over the Mind of Man; Nature Inspires its Errors; God alone gives his Light and Brightness to his Prophet. Sometimes the Devil and Nature conspire together, to darken the Light of the Holy Spirit in the Heart, and raise false Ideas in the Prophet. Sometimes it happens that these three Causes are at War together, the Devil, Nature and the Holy Spirit. We mistake Falshood for Truth, Vice passes for Virtue, Virtue for Vice, and Darknes for Light. St.

St. Greg.
5 Moral.
ch. 27.

Gre. says, He that sees the Light, knows that it is the Light; he that knows not the Brightness of Light, mistakes Things that are dark for those that are clear and bright. It is said of Ignatius Loyola, the

Ma^{re} vita
Ignatii.

Founder of the Order of the Jesuits, that the Devil appeared to him under the Figure of a bright glorious Being, casting an agreeable Brightness upon his Eyes. And thus likewise the Scripture tells us, *That Satan transforms himself into an Angel of Light.* And the Apostle St. John admonishes and exhorts us, *not to believe every Spirit, but to try the Spirits, whether they are of God.* Hence it is that St. Augustine draws this Argument; I will try that I may not be deceived: certainly, if I do not try the Spirits that they are of God, I may abandon my self to such Spirits as are not of God, and so be deceived by false Prophets.

August.
Serm. 30.
de Verb.
Apst.

What shall I therefore do, how shall I make this Proof? St. Augustine is under a great Concern, he acknowledges and finds the Difficulty; but cannot tell how to acquit himself in it.

Saint *Chrysostom*, in his Homily of the Holy Ghost, seems to clear St. *Augustin's* Difficulty, in saying, No body can discern distinctly, who Possess'd with an unclean Spirit, or with the Holy Ghost; for if the Spirit were visible, it would not deceive. *Montanus* came, saying, I have the Holy Ghost. *Manicheus* came, saying, I have the Holy Ghost. Ought we to believe them? No! For this was not evident; there were no Proofs of it. One or more Signs may easily deceive us, if we do not sum up all the Evidence that can be procur'd in a Matter so difficult to find out. There is nothing more ambiguous. The Connexion and Agreement of all Circumstances must be carefully considered, upon which depends the Knowledge of this Subject, so as to give a right Judgment of it. In Effect, the discerning of Spirits is a particular Gift, not bestow'd on all; and Prophecy is in it self so difficult, that it cannot be known, but by the Revelation of the Holy Ghost, who alone is able to make us distinguish a Divine Revelation from a Human and Diabolical Delusion and Phantasm. It is a certain Truth, that the Spirit of Prophecy does not always enlighten the Understanding of the Prophets. For as it is said of the Holy Spirit, *That he blows where he pleaseth*; so we ought to know why, and how he will blow, according to the Observation of *Thomas Aquinas*, upon 1 Cor. chap. 12. The Holy Spirit, according to the Power and Liberty which he hath, blows and inspires when he pleases, and where he pleases, to enlighten the Minds of Men. For this Reason, our Saviour advises

advises us, saying, Beware of False Prophets which come to you in Sheeps Clothing, but inwardly they are ravening Wolves; ye shall know them by their Fruits. Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Many will say to me in that Day, Lord, Lord, have we not Prophesied in thy Name? and in thy Name have we cast out Devils? and in thy Name, done many wonderful Works. And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: Depart from me ye that work Iniquity. Without doubt this Threatning denounced against a False Prophet, is very terrible. If there arise among you a Prophet, who giveth thee a Sign or a Wonder, and the Sign or the Wonder come to pass, thou shalt not hearken to the words of that Prophet. But that Prophet shall be put to Death, because he hath spoken to turn you away from the Lord your God. It is said again, The Prophet that shall be so presumptuous as to say some Things in the Name of the Lord, which I have not Commanded to speak, or who shall speak in the Name of other Gods, that Prophet shall be put to Death.

S E C T. V.

We cannot establish a firm Judgment of the Prophecies of the Time, the Rise of which is so uncertain, and little or not at all to be believed.

Admitting what we have already said, that we ought very well to weigh and examine the Spirits before we can give an exact decisive Judgment concerning them ; it is impossible to use too much Precaution, lest we be deceived. This is certainly true, *For he that believes upon slight Grounds, is of an unconstant Mind, and he that tenderly sins against himself, says the Author of Ecclesiasticus, that is, according to the Paraphrase of some Bibles, Whoever sins against himself, sins with a bad Conscience, by reason of a rash Judgment.* Prevention often imitates Faith, as a Flatterer does a Friend, according to the Comparison of *Clemens Alexandrinus* : to which we may add, that a Flatterer commonly has more Success than a Friend. If we shou'd give way to a Precipitate Judgment, we subject our selves to all the Extravagant Fancies and Revelations of Phanaticks and Enthusiasts, every one of which, pretends to be assur'd, that he is guided by the Spirit of God ; a very short way to maintain all, even the most impious Errors. It is the Character of all Hereticks to broach new Opinions, and to endeavour to establish them, that they may by that means, gain Credit and Authority

thority in the World, and in the Church. And to make their gross Delusions and Phantasms pass the better; they boast of having had some particular Revelations concerning the Subject they treat of. *Ecclesiastical History* makes mention of a *Cerintus*, a *Simon*, a *Mark*, a *Menander*, a *Basilides*, a *Valentinus*, and many more, who have made their fabulous Revelations pass for Truths. The Visions and Prophecies of *Montanus* with those of the two Women, *Priscilla* and *Maximilia*, gained so much Credit with the unhappy *Theodoret*, that after he had suffered himself to be surpriz'd, and charm'd with them, he employed all the force of his Wit and Eloquence to set forth the Praise of them.

It is these learned Men that God gives up to the Power of Error to believe a Lie. Where they will say, God makes choice of the Weak and Ignoble to communicate his Spirit to them, and render them Prophets. Was not *Amos* a Prophet, tho' a Herdsman, and in which Employment he was found when the Spirit of God came upon him and made him a Prophet? God does not regard the outward Condition and Appearance of Men. Ought we therefore to be surpriz'd, if he makes choice of rude illiterate Mechanicks, and Persons of the meanest Condition to be his Prophets?

I answer, and say; 1. That as *Malachi* was the last of all the Prophets under the Oeconomy of the Law, so under the Oeconomy of the Gospel, our Saviour sent out such Apostles as were most of them taken and called from ordinar

ary Employments, as Fishing, &c. a Rude ignorant sort of Men, to be the first Establishers of the Gospel, and enduing them with the Gift of Infallibility, and the Power of working Miracles. Notwithstanding, he was pleased to distinguish some with the Gift of Prophecy. But now there are no more Apostles, no more Prophets, no more Evangelists enrich'd with the Gift of the Holy Ghost. Prophets and Apostles are now no where to be found, but in Heaven, or in the Bible.

2. If there appear some, who give themselves the title of Prophets, who boast, that the Voice of God, or the Holy Spirit, has been Communicated to them, to speak in the Secret of their Heart, and to declare publicly his Will: We may without doubt say the same of them, as is said in the Church of *Rome*, to have happen'd to a Holy Father of the Church, viz. *Justin Martyr*, to whom an Angel was one Day sent down from Heaven to Discourse with him in a very private solitary Place, about no other Business or Errand, than only to tell him, that the true Philosophy was to be found in the Holy Scriptures. But tho' these Prophets teach nothing contrary to the Holy Scriptures, that does not hinder but that we may deny the Truth of their Commission, at least reserve to our selves the Liberty of examining it, according to the Rules delivered to us in the Holy Scriptures: Following likewise the wise Counsel which St. *Ambrose* gives us, that in ^{In Proem.} ^{Luce.} the Time of the Prophets the People had the Gift of discerning of Spirits, in order

to know those whom they ought to reject ; in the same manner as we distinguish good Money from false. But now, as we are not enriched with the same Grace of the Gift of discerning Spirits by any acquired Light whatever ; so we ought to address our selves to God in this earnest Prayer of *Godeau*, a Famous Bishop of France, which he pronounced upon a like occasion, O God let not there, for the Punishment of our Sins, be a lying Spirit in the Mouth of these Preachers, or these vain Prophets, as thou suffer'd'st to be in the Prophets of *Abah*.

3. If they were only a few bigotted Women, who say and believe that these three Young *Cevenneze* Prophets, are truly such as they pretend themselves to be, we might say that their Natural Temper disposes them to a too easy Credulity, and to an Admiration of these Prophets, which is only founded upon Prejudice and Prepossession. But there are some Persons who adhere to these Prophets as it were out of a Design to set them in the same Rank with those of Old, and by their exaggerated Commendations of them, even to make them Superiour to those Men of God never mentioning them without the Appellation of good Men, and such as have very good Intentions. If they, I say, fall into a Discourse of the Modern Prophets, they make them as Angels sent down from Heaven, and load them with an extravagant Profusion of Praise beyond any thing that has ever been heard of. If I shou'd make them a present of any thing suitable to their Merit, it shou'd be the Ephe

Gideon, or that of *Micah*, with which they
 should be invested as a fit Reward for their false
 prophecies. But without being too pleasant,
 in so serious a matter, all those Women that
 have been infatuated, and those Men who have
 highly applauded these pretended Prophets,
 let me in Mind of an account given
 by St. *Augustin* concerning two
 Women, the one of which was a *Ma-*
nichean, the other an *Orthodox*. The
Orthodox Woman not enduring the excessive
 Commendations which the *Manichean* gave of
 the Sun, as of a Deity, rose hastily from her
 seat and run to trample under her Feet some
 of the Rays of the Sun, which entred through
 a Window into a Chamber. See, said she, it
 is the Sun your God that I trample under my
 feet. St. *Augustin* tells us this Story to Re-
 proach the *Manicheans*, who tho' they laughed
 at this Woman, did notwithstanding imitate
 her, when they adhered to the Holy Scriptures.
 And we ought also to imitate this same Wo-
 man, eminent in the *Orthodox* Religion, and
 to leave those extravagant Praises which they
 give to these new Prophets, as to their Idols.
 Scandalous, indiscreet bigotted Prophets, who
 attribute that to the Holy Ghost, which is no
 more than the Thought of the Hearts of Men :

Aug. de
 Utilitate
 credend. c. 6.

SECT.

S E C T. VI.

Of the ill Use made of Modern Prophecies.

WE are told every where of the Wild, Chimerical Prophecies of these Young Men, and we are assured that they profess themselves to be true Prophets, and that they themselves are perswaded of it. But it is believed amongst Men of better Sense, that this is only the Effect of a weak disturbed Imagination caused by a Disorder of the Brain, which sometimes happens to very wise and able Men. To take the matter in this Sense, is to deal favourably with them. It is one of the Miseries of Human Nature, that Reason and good Sense are, as we may say, sometimes vanquished and dethroned in one of their Provinces, and become subject to an irregular depraved Imagination. To pursue this Reflection, in Favour of these pretended Prophets, let us give one or two Instances of this Extravagance. A famous Philosopher of the last Age, of great Spligheliness, Subtilty, and Sharpness of Wit, either by a very extraordinary Attention, or by some peculiar Favour of Heaven, pretended he could hear very distinctly the Harmony of the Heavenly Spheres in their Motion one above another; though 'tis certain the Generality of Mankind hear nothing of it. They might have told him very well, that what he heard was only a Noise in his Head, caused either by Air in

close

closed, or some Vapour pent up, or some small Animal, which constantly and immoderately Beats upon the Drum of the Ear. But perhaps he would have laugh'd at the Simplicity of this, or any other Reason against a Truth which he so sensibly perceived.

What shall we say of the fine Genius of *Italy*, Celebrated not only for its Poetry, but a vast Number of other Works of very good Sense, by which one of its Votaries was perswaded to quit all, and do nothing but hear attentively a certain familiar Spirit, which, says he, was accustomed to visit him from time to time: Afterwards he returned Answers to this Spirit, not in wild extravagant Expressions, but with all that was Elegant, Fine, Noble, and Just in *Plato's* Philosophy, or in all the *Pagan* Morality; so that if we believe what is related in his Life, there was no one cou'd read over his Imperfect Dialogue, though he was never so wise a Man, but he was so far from curing him of his Folly, that he was afraid of conversing too familiarly with him, lest he himself might fall into the same Extravagance. The unfortunate *Torquato Tasso*, instead of admiring the Saying of *Socrates* concerning his Demon, ought to have Corrected it by the *Christian* Morality. It is no difficult matter to apply these two Stories. I leave them as the most proper to do it, who make it their business to impose upon themselves and others their Chimerical Fancies and Delusions. If the telling of a third Story wou'd contribute any thing towards their Remedy, I shou'd do it by relating an Instance of the most Famous

mous and most Grand Imposture that ever was
 acted by a Man, who lived in great State and
 died in the last Age. To carry on this Impo-
 sture with the better Success, he had without
 doubt made it the chief business and applica-
 tion of his whole Life, studying to make all
 his Actions and Impostures pass, as if they were
 done by an especial Direction and Influence of
 Heaven. Sometimes he wou'd give Orders to
 a Prophet or a Prophetess to come to him while
 he was in full Council, or at the Head of his
 Army, and to command him from God to do
 such things as he had before privately resolved
 upon within himself. So that all his Counsels
 were in greater Authority, and passed for the
 Motions of the Holy Ghost. If there was any
 Action to be done, that was like to redound
 to the Honour of his Friend, or preserving the
 Honour and Life of his Neighbour, he wou'd
 declare solemnly that that was his Intention,
 but that God had revealed to him, that it was
 not agreeable to his Holy Will. Thus wou'd
 there be a Gate opened for Enthusiasts to Mur-
 der Fathers, Brothers, Kings, and to commit
 any kind of Wickedness, after the Example of
 this Grand Villain, without receiving at the
 same time any Authority from the Actions of
Abraham and *Jephtha*, who were moved to them
 by Reasons altogether Divine, which they with
 their Prophetical Spirit cannot Comprehend.
 Unhappy Thoughts, miserable Prophets, that
 suffer themselves to be govern'd by a Spirit
 Error !

In effect such sort of Prophets may happen to be Lyars, Cheats, Impostors, and Villains, and though they may believe themselves to be, and may pass for, Prophets, yet this is in them only an ill-grounded Faith, and obstinate Opinion, caused by the Heat of the Imagination. In short, it is nothing but a Vision, a Chimerical Conceit caused by an affected voluntary Ignorance. Prophecy is one of those Charms that corrupt the Use of Reason, but are not able to destroy the Faculty. When the Cloud comes to be dispersed, there's no other Impression of it remaining, but the Shame and surprize for their past Errors. It is ordinary for such Men to pass on from one Error to another, till at last they believe themselves enlightened by the Holy Ghost, and to be Prophets. Indeed there is nothing that flatters the Pride and Vanity of Men so much as to wear the Emod, and to be the Founders of a new Religion. It is evident, an entire Independance of Discipline and Government has been always the cause or effect of an infinite Number of Errors, giving the Devil a fair Opportunity to introduce into his Disciples all the Fancies and Chimeras their Mind is Capable of. One of the most fatal Errors, one can fall into, is to Create Schism, and to bring under contempt the Established Order and Authority, to trample upon which is a most flagrant Crime; or to teach that there is no Church, no Sacraments, no Ministry, but such as they form among themselves, or which they arrogate to themselves; lastly, no Discipline, which is to serve for

a Rule to those that do well, and for a Curb and Chastisement to the refractory. I say, yet farther, that the Errors which are vented by some Phanatical, Turbulent, and Obstinate Spirits, are as so many *Hydra's*, which it is difficult utterly to rout and destroy, because they generally strike in, and get themselves firmly engaged with the self-Love, and self-Interest of Men, which are ordinarily preferred both to Honour and Conscience.

Such is the Unhappiness of our Prophets who being abused by some weak Reasons, intrude themselves into the Office of Preaching and Prophecyng, with saying, that the Spiritblows were it listeth, and that it is not confined to the Schools; that it is sufficient to have an inward Call, with Talents necessary to dispense it. Upon this it may not be improper to relate a Story, which is very singular and known to very few. A Man very famous in the Countries we before-mentioned, in his last Sickness, charged one of his Oldest Friends to give him Notice when he shou'd find there was no hopes of his Recovery. The Friend was just to his Charge, and accordingly acquainted him with his approaching End. The Sick Man rousing up all the Strength and Spirit he had left, ordered those that attended him to retire, and to leave him for some time with God alone. His private Meditations were out of Measure long: he caused them all to turn, whom he had Commanded to retire, Parents, Friends, Officers, and Domesticks, and then said to them with an Air of Ease and Satisfaction, fear nothing but rather go and

turn Publick and Solemn Thanks to God : I have prayed that he wou'd do with me according to his Pleasure ; and he hath Evidently revealed to me that I shall not die, and that unworthy as I am he has reserved me, for some things which will be much more for his Honour and Service. The Company departed full of Joy , and reported every where the Good News ; except his Old intimate Friend, who stay'd behind to learn something more particular concerning this matter. He assured him that he wou'd discover to him the whole Secret, and that was, that the Revelation was indeed feigned, but that he run no venture by that Fiction : for if he must die, the Report that his Recovery was Predicted, being Noised abroad, wou'd give him an opportunity of dying peaceably , and wou'd give his Family some little time to secure themselves : but if the Physicians shou'd prove mistaken in pronouncing his Recovery desperate, as they often do, then he by his Prediction wou'd Establish his Character not only in his own Country, but over all *Europe*, as of a Man sent from God. But it happened that this Visionary or Counterfeit Prophet died, and left the World behind him to talk of his impious Presumption and Knavery. This became a Common Story in the *French Court*, a great Minister there (who took Notice of this Preumptuous Action, only out of regard to the Policy of the Man) telling it to a Protestant Quality, now an Ambassador in *London*, upon whose Credit we transmit it to Posterity.

S E C T. VII.

*Of the fatal Consequences caused by this sort
of Prophets.*

GEORGE *Hornius*, in his History, to shew the Folly of such inlightened Persons, relates several Instances of them. He tells us of one *Knipperdoling* a German, who creeping upon his Hands and Feet through a great Croud of People in a Publick Place, he breath'd into their Mouths, saying to every one of them ; The Father hath sanctified thee, receive thou the Holy Ghost. We see likewise at this Time our Prophets attempting to infuse a Prophetical Spirit into some silly Women and weak Men, by I do not know what kind of Charm, which possesses them with the like Motions and Agitations. Such is the Mystery of Iniquity.

The same Historian speaks of one *David* of *Delph*, who went so far as to say that he was the *Messias*, not conceived of the Flesh, but of the Holy Ghost, and of the Spirit of *Christ* who is the true Spirit. If any one Sinned against him, that Sin would never be Pardoned. He forewarned them that he shou'd die, but that he shou'd rise again within three Years, which says *Hornius*, never yet came to pass. Shall we therefore slightly believe every thing that is told us by Three Miserable pretended Prophets, that within Three Years the World shall be Changed, that there shall fall a Curse upon unbeliev

ing impenitent Sinners, and a Blessing and Grace upon the Good and Elect?

Hornius likewise says, that one *Henry*, surnamed the *Family of Love*, pretended himself to be above *Moses* and *Jesus Christ*. *Moses*, says he, taught nothing but Hope, *Christ* taught nothing but Faith, but that he was come into the World to introduce Charity. So these new Prophets will tell us, that they come by a Divine Inspiration to Preach to us Repentance. I would therefore ask them, what is the Badge of your Commission? *Jonah* went by an express Command of the Lord, we find his Embassy in his Book; he was alone when he went to Preach Repentance to the *Ninivites*: Ye are three without Order or Commission from God. *John Baptist* came alone to Preach Repentance for the Remission of Sins, and to be the Fore-runner of *Jesus Christ*; and ye are three, as the Fore-runners of many other False Prophets, and are marked for Impostors. They have driven you from your Places of Abode, being persuaded, that ye are no other than Disturbers of the Publick Peace, and ye are come to trouble *Israel*.

Iustus Velsius, a very Learned Man, said he was sent from God to deliver People from Death: and in Order to confirm his Doctrine by Miracles; he did what he could to cure the Blind and the Lame. But upon his not succeeding, he imputed it to their Unbelief. We also pass for Unbelievers with the Spirit of our Prophets, when with Indignation we reject their Prophecies, which have no Character, nor the least Appearance of Truth. Reason consequently can

never be brought to submit to such Impostors, and sensible Men will abhor such Practices.

Another Impostor, called *Barchocab*, boasted, that he was the Promised *Messias*, and under the specious word, Belief, he abused some of his own Nation. To make his Delusions pass the better amongst his Followers, he held a lighted Torch in his Mouth, and breathed out Flames with his Words, imitating the Knavery of one *Eunes*, or *Eum*, surnamed of the *Star*, Originally of *Bretagne*, who said he was the *Christ*, for this sole Reason, that in the Form of some Exorcisms there is in *Latin*, *per Eum*, &c. by him that must come to Judge the Quick and the Dead; so making of this Latin Pronoun *eum*, which signifies him, his own proper Name, that is *Eum*. It is this same *Eunes*, whom *Florus* mentions in his History, who by this stratagem, raised above 60000 Slaves in the *Roman Empire*.

Lib. 5.
Cent.

Upon occasion of a like Subject *Paulus Romanus* the Civilian, speaking of Divines, and their Predictions mentions this Law. Those who attempt to introduce new unknown Opinions and Forms of Worship, and by that means give occasion for Troubles and Seditions, ought to be banish'd the State, if they are rais'd to any great Post of Dignity; and as for others, let them be punished with Death.

Let us return to *Hornius's* History, and join *Sleidan* with him. Both of them in their several Histories reflecting upon Things of this Nature, tell us, that Fires and Massacres are the fatal Consequences of some false Inspiration which

which for the most Part are the Inventions of
 Men, or the Suggestions of the Devil, *who was*
Murderer and a Lyar from the Beginning. *Hurnius*
 in particular, tells of one *Nicholas Stork*, and
 one *Thomas Muntzer*, *Germans*, who pretended
 themselves to be Prophets, and had Presumpti-
 on enough to say, that the Holy Scripture is
 nothing, in comparison of the Word of Truth,
 which speaks in us : and under pretence of this
 Word, they vented a Thousand monstrous Errors.
 They declared the *Millennium* was come, or
 God's Reign for a thousand Years, and that
 it was to begin with them ; and that it was up-
 on Account of this Reign, they were to Depose
 and Murder those Magistrates and Princes that
 opposed this Reign, or the Motions of that Spi-
 rit within them, with which they were filled.
Muntzer boasted. that God had given him in a
 Vision, the Sword of *Gideon*, to employ it when
 Occasion required. These are terrible Visions,
 and from such Visionaries we ought to Pray
 God to deliver us. It is a common Observati-
 on, that such Prophets as were Inspired with the
 same Spirit as *Muntzer* was, generally end with
 the Sword and the Effusion of Blood. Above
 a hundred thousand Men followed this Impo-
 stor, of which more than 50000 were kill'd in
 one Body, in the Year 1525. without either
 Defending themselves, Flying or Quitting their
 Station, being perswaded, that he could, meerly
 with the lap of his Coat, as he had Promised
 them, break the force of the Cannon, and that
 he could receive the Bullets without being
 wounded by them. *Muntzer* was taken and
 punish'd

punish'd for his Treason, by having his Head cut off.

Another Impostor met with the same Fate, and that was *John of Leyden* his Successor. He was no more but a Poor Taylor by Trade, who with three other Enthusiasts became the Principal Author of a dreadful War. The Barbarous Procedure of these Visionaries was a Thing full of Terror, who never spoke of any thing but Inspirations, Visions and Prophecies, and yet filled the World with their Murders and Robberies. This *John of Leyden* from a Taylor became, as he called himself, a King, or universal Monarch of the whole Earth. From a King, he became a Butcher, causing any to be Kill'd or Massacred that he would ; being himself the Bloody Executioner of his own Wife.

It is a dangerous Thing, after the Example of *John of Leyden*, to quit ones first proper Employment, which is a common Inlet to Idleness and from Idleness, one of course falls into extravagant Fancies and Projects, which seldom fail of being attended with Poverty ; from whence Men are hurried on into such dangerous Enterprizes and Misfortunes, from which 'tis a hard Matter to disengage or free themselves, and 'tis a hazard, if at last, being involved in a thousand Disasters, they do not Die a shameful, cruel, and cursed Death.

I speak this by way of Advice, not of Prophecy, Let every one keep to his own Employment, and be contented with his Condition and that I may apply the Words of *St. Paul* to this

Purpose, Let every one believe, that the Things
 which I write, are the Commandments of the Lord.
 I shall conclude with the words of the Pro-
 phet Jeremiah, Chap. 23. ver. 14. I have seen
 the Prophets of Jerusalem a horrible thing: they
 walk in Lies, they strengthen also the Hands of Evil-
 ers, that none doth return from his Wickedness.—
 Israel, the Days of thy Visitation are come,
 thy Prophets are Fools, and thy Men of Reve-
 lation are without Understanding. ver. 16.
 Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Hearken not unto the
 words of the Prophets that prophesie unto you, they
 make you vain, they speak Vision of their own Hearts,
 and not out of the Mouth of the Lord, ver. 21. I
 have not sent these Prophets, yet they ran, I have not
 spoken, yet they prophesied.

Remarks

*Remarks concerning the Impostor Hermas, Author
of the Sybilline Verses, of the fourth Book of Eldras
and the Book of the Pastor.*

*Lib. 3. ch. 7.
pag. 490.*

MR. *Dailé*, in his Book concerning Punishments and Satisfaction, speaks thus, Though it is not easy to tell from whence the first and ancientest Writers derived the Original of Prayers for the Dead; notwithstanding, I find very profitable, what I have learned from the Reverend and very Learned Mr. *Blondel*, the Author of the Sybilline Verses, furnish them with Matter and Occasion for this Error.

Lib. 1. pag. 9. Mr. *Blondel* himself speaking this Author assures us, that he was a Christian by Profession.

St. *Paul* in his Epist. to the *Rom.* ch. 16. 14. mentions the Name of this Christian, which Mr. *Blondel* discourses upon. The Apostle places him in the Number of those whom he Salutes of whom *Origen* speaks, according to the Testimony of *Martyr* in his Commentary, upon the Epistle of St. *Paul*, who relates the Encomium *Origen* gives in Favour of *Hermas*; Saying *Hunc Origenes putat authorem fuisse libri pastoris quam scripturam ait sibi videri sanctam & divinam inspiratam*, *Origen* believed, that *Hermas* was the Author of the Book, intituled, the Pastor which he says, is a holy and divinely inspired Writing. *Martyr* opposes this, and assures

that the Book is not Canonical, and that we ought not to receive it.

Pareus, who has commented upon the same Epistle of *St. Paul* to the *Romans*, do's indeed place this *Hermas* in the Number of those, whom the Apostle Salutes ; but he places him in a Rank inferior to other Persons, and allows him no other Commendation above what is due to common People, that have raised themselves above contempt. *Pareus* says the

same of *Hermas*, as do's *Martyr*, Lib. 3. c. p.
160.

viz. that the Book of the Pastor is an Apocryphal Book, even according to *Eusebius's* Account. If he had been a canonical Person, *St. Paul* wou'd not have refused to give him the same Praises that he gives to others, in saluting them. But since he only barely mentions him, this shews, that he deserves no such distinguishing Character.

Daillé and *Blondel* make this *Hermas* the Author of the *Sybilline Verses*, and the Book intitled the Pastor. *Blondel* speaking

of the *Sybils*, says, the first Appearance of the Romance of the

Lib. 2. c. 23. p.
230.

counterfeit *Sybil*, seems to have been in the Year 138. He had already told us, that the Author was a *Christian* by Profession, and it is the *Hermas* whom *St. Paul* mentions. *Blondel* mentions him when speaking of the *Sybils*, he says, that *Pope Pius* who was installed the 7th. of March 146, writing to *Justus* of *Vienna*, tells him, that his Brother *Hermas* the Priest, called the Pastor, is Dead worthily in the Lord. From hence it appears that *Hermas* though altogether

a Christian by Profession, was looked upon as the Author of the *Sybilline Verses*. This Book of *Hermas* is quoted by many of the ancient Fathers, and amongst others by St. *Atanasius*, *Origen* and *Tertullian*. An Account is given of it in the *Bibliotheca Patrum*. *Bellarmin's* Opinion is, that this Book of the *Sybils* is entirely Fabulous.

Having in this Book cited *Hermas* as an Impostor, I thought these few Remarks concerning him were due to the Publick.

Letter to Mr. Maximilian Misson, upon the Subject of the Miracle of the Fire, lighted at the Request of Clary in the Cevennes; attested by two Witnesses, and confirmed by Colonel Cavalier, to whom a Copy of this Letter is addressed.

S I R,

WHEN you was pleased to make me a Present of your Book, Intituled, *The Sacred Theatre of the Cevennes*, you requested of me to read it from End to End. I have made good my Promise, and declare to you, that I have read it over, with all the Care and Attention I was capable of. I cou'd give you full proofs of it, but that my Domestick Affairs, and other Businesses of a quite different Nature, will at present give me Leisure. Sir, I heartily beg your Pardon, that I can only now have time to speak to you concerning the Miracle of the Fire, lighted in Favour of *Clary*, as being a particular, that most of all affected me in reading your Book, and which in my Opinion, deserves some Reflections. These which I have made will not I hope be unfavourably received by you. I have been always averse to a Spirit of Wrangling and Contradiction, as knowing by Experience, that Disputes generally do onlyasperate Mens Minds, which are hardly brought to any Agreement in the Heat of Contention. I am content only to open to you the matter, without engaging in it my self. If there be a Reward or a Crown to be gained, I leave that to the Glory of it. I shall stand at the Rails
to

to see you Run, and if you reach the Goal, shall be the first that will proclaim your Victory.

Give me leave, Sir, to acquaint you, that the Subject of my Letter will be confined to the three Particulars; *First*, a critical Dissertation concerning the Subject of this Miracle; *Secondly*, some Objections against the Truth of it; and *Thirdly*, a serious Examination of it, in Relation to those two Miracles mentioned in Holy Scripture, the Fire in the *Bush*, and the Furnace.

As to the *First*, I find in the 38th, and following Pages of your Book, the Name of *John Cavalier* amongst the Number of the inspired who deposes, that upon Account of a certain Prophecy of *Clary's*, concerning two Spies, who had intruded themselves into their Assembly, and occasioned some great Suspicions, so as to make the greatest Part of them complain; believing these two Spies were suborned, and that there was an Intelligence between them and *Clary*, and that his Prophecy was no more than a Delusion, and a Trick to be plaid at Pleasure. *Clary* to draw them out of this Error, and confirm the Truth of his Revelation; employs a Second, O ye of little Faith, says he to them, *is it for this Reason that ye doubt of my Power after so many Miracles that I have wrought before you? Let there be immediately a Fire lighted; I say unto thee, my Child, I suffer thee to throw thy self into the middle of the Flames, and they shall have no Power over thee.* Upon this Inspiration, *Clary* demanded with redoubled Agitations of his whole Body, that they would prepare a Faggot. So

Men of good Sence have made this Observation; which, Sir, I desire you to take particular Notice of, that those of *Clary's* Assembly having never been used to account him a Prophet, drew from hence this Consequence, That what he said might proceed from his being concerned, or vexed at them, and that they seeing no true Mark of Prophecy, went so far as to Complain against the Prophet. From whence then had they occasion to doubt? It must either be, that these Men had some very good Grounds for their remaining so long, and obstinately in Suspence, or that they were possessed with an insuperable Hardness of Heart. They had heard of the Prophecies of many other Prophets of this Kind; so that they cou'd not but be very well instructed and qualified to judge of the one, by the other. That which might keep them in doubt, was, that Mr. *Cavalier* the chief Man of the Assembly was himself present there. For according to his Deposition, related by Mr. *Misson*, it is said, that in respect of the Fire which was commanded by the Revelation of *Clary*, *the said Cavalier was not very urgent about a matter of such consequence*; which shews, that Mr. *Cavalier* looked upon *Clary* as a deceitful Prophet, placing but small trust in his Revelations; when at the same time *Clary* wou'd have had himself esteemed a Prophet of the first Order, a true Worker of Miracles. This is so far true, that *Command Fage* assures us, *That Cavalier deliberated on the matter, and after some Importunity gave way to it*. That is, it was not without Reluctancy and Difficulty, as not being yet fully perswaded

of the Truth of the Revelation, and the Virtue of the Miracle. *That he consented to have a Faggot prepared, and that with a great Deal of Indifference he permitted them to seek for some Wood, and to make a Fire quickly; so they gathered some Wood, with some Bushes, and dry Sticks, which they immediately piled up. This is the Deposition of Durand Fage. But John Cavalier deposes, that perhaps there were there some Vine-branches. Now this perhaps spoils all. For what probability is there, that there shou'd be Vines in a great Wood, where they were assembled, and that some Vine-branches shou'd be casually mixed with the dead Sticks and Bushes? Besides that Durand Fage assures us, that he was one of those that gathered the Sticks, and that they found them all burnt, being such as were designed for the burning of a Kiln; and he says nothing of the Vine-branches with a Perhaps, and much less do's he speak of large Branches mixed with dry small Sticks; Cavalier relates the matter. Now this makes sort of Difference and Contradiction between these two Depositions, the one of Durand Fage and the other of John Cavalier; which lessens the Truth of Clary's Prophecy, and makes the Miracle it self look Suspicious.*

If any farther Proofs of this kind are required to evince this, we need but relate Clary's Revelation, according to Durand Fage, I say to thee Child, to which he adds these Words, which create a new Doubt, somewhat like these Words. This somewhat like, is certainly not the Style of a true Prophet. These are the prophetic Words, *that I may make known my Power and Truth*

will that a Fire be forthwith kindled. Here are omitted the Words which Cavalier deposes to have been spoken by Clary, O ye of little Faith, is it for this Reason that ye doubt of my Power, after so many Miracles that I have wrought before you. But if we continue this Speech of Clary, according to Page and that thou cast thy self into the middle, without the Flames being able to do thee any Harm. Be not afraid, my Child, obey my Command, I will be with thee, and will preserve thee. This entirely changes the matter; there are two different Oracles, one from the other, where the propheticall Spirit varies, upon which it is impossible to establish a Solid Judgment.

Afterwards we have no Account how the Fire was lighted, Page assures us, that the Fire was lighted, but I know not, says he, whether Clary himself lighted it. John Cavallier says not one Word of this; he only says, that Clary placed himself in the middle of the Heap of dry Wood, standing upright, and holding his Hands joined together over his Head, Being all the time under great Agitation, and speaking by Inspiration. After all this Cavalier tells us, that he knows nothing of this but by Report, which others told him of the Things which he said. How then can it be said that he saw him in the Agitation, that he spoke by Inspiration. Cavalier speaks again by hear say, I was told that it was Clary himself that put Fire to the Wood; and that the Fire took hold in an Instant as soon as he touched the Wood; whereas Page deposes, that he does not know whether Clary himself lighted the Fire, and he adds, that as the Flames began to rise, he entered into the middle

dle of them, and staid there a Quarter of an Hour. This is what we are to conclude from Mr. Milles's Gloss. He continues and tells us, that he came out of the Fire without receiving the least Damage to it, having not so much as a Hair of his Head singed. Certainly in these two Relations of the same propheticall Spirit, there is not to be seen the least Appearance of a Miracle, we see nothing but Doubt, Uncertainty and Contradiction; every thing is full of insuperable Difficulties. *John Cavalier* assures us, That the Faggot was kindled by a Miracle, by *Clary's* only touching it, and this he says only upon another's Credit, and by hear-say; and *Fage* says, that he knows nothing at all of it, though he was present; which is demonstrative Evidence, that they were imposed upon by a Delusion, and that it was nothing but a pretended Miracle.

The Difficulty of all this consists in knowing whence the Fire came, whether from God immediately, or from *Clary*. To say that God is mighty to Day, Yesterday, and for Evermore, and that he exercises his Power according to the Pleasure of his good Will, is what we are obliged to confess and believe. But then I say, whether they will likewise own without Doubt, that God is wise, and that he does every Thing wisely to glorifie his infinite Power, that he orders the End which he proposes, after having established the Means, and his Means and Ends founded upon Reasons of a necessity, which he himself supposes, being always free in all his Works.

If they then pretend to assure us of a

hecy? where is the necessity or Reason of the
 Miracle that is to ascertain it. Certainly the
 necessity is none at all, and the Reason is but
 very weak. The whole Body of the Youth,
 that composed that little Army which pretended
 to oppose that of the King of *France*, which
 was infinitely Superiour to it, both in the Num-
 ber, and regular Discipline of the Men; saw it
 self conducted by an invisible Hand, of which
 they had perpetually most glorious Proofs, by the
 continual Victories they gained over their formida-
 ble Enemies. This entirely convinced them
 that the God of Battels was on their side, and con-
 sequently they had no want of Miracles to be-
 confirm'd in the Truth of it. To say, that it
 was *Clary* himself that works the Miracle, wou'd
 be to ascribe to him a Power altogether Divine,
 that like another *Elijah*, or *Elisha*, he might
 cause Fire to descend invisibly down from Hea-
 ven, to kindle the Faggot; or upon his touch-
 ing it, the Flame might immediately take hold
 of the dry green Wood, of which the Faggot
 was composed. If it then is not downright
 blasphemy, we may say without Profaneness,
 that *Virtue is gone out of Clary*. In short, on what
 soever we view this Miracle, we are in-
 danger of finding it either false or dubious.

The *Second* thing I propos'd to treat of in
 this Letter, is some Objections against the Truth
 of the Miracle.

All the Ages of the World have had Experi-
 ence of false Miracles, which Impostors wou'd
 have made pass for true, even till the
 Day of the Descent of the Holy Ghost, and a-
 gain

gain since visible Gifts have ceased in the Church. To join false Miracles with Prophecy, even in the Time of the Apostles, is to join Imposture and Knavery together. It is thus that they speak of the Arch-Heretick *Simon*, who caused Statues to walk, who cou'd fly in the Air, who cou'd convert Stones into Bread, and who cou'd lie down upon the Fire without receiving any Harm. *Baron. Ann. 68. apud Spond.*

Origen and *Tertullian* give us an Account of one *Hermotinus Clofomenus*, whose Soul having quitted his Body travelled in Form of a Vagabond into very remote Countries, and told the remarkable Occurrences he there met with; his Body being burned in his Absence, the Soul returned into the same Body as in a Case. *Origen* and *Tertullian* look upon this as a Fable, and are of Opinion that it is an Artifice of the Deceitful. *Tert. de Anima, cap. 44.*

The *Jews* tell us, that *Abraham* living in *Chaldea*, upon his refusing to worship the Fire which was the God of the Country, was cast into the Fire, and that he was delivered out of it by a Miracle. And thus they interpret the Words of *Moses*, that *Abraham* departed from *Ur of the Chaldees*. *Ur* in the *Chaldaic* Language signifies Fire; so that instead of saying, he departed from *Ur of the Chaldees*, it shou'd be said that he was delivered from the Fire of the *Chaldees*. But this is a Fable and ought to be rejected as such.

Pope Pius the Fifth declares in his Bull, that by *Philip L'Abbe* in his Ecclesiastical Writers, a *Crucifix* spoke in favour of *Thomas Aquinas*,

ing to him, *Thomas thou hast spoken of me as was
thy Duty to speak.* This was an Artifice of Pope
Pius to Authorize the Adoration of the Cross,
by this Fiction.

Upon the same Grounds of Probability we
ought to believe what they endeavour to per-
swade us of, as a standing Truth in the Church
of Rome; that some Virgins cast themselves vo-
luntarily upon a burning Faggot, and that they
withdrew from it again alive and sound, for a
Testimony of their Faith.

And so all the Miracles they tell us of in the
Legends of their Saints, we may receive upon
the like Authority as true Miracles.

The Miracle that is wrought almost every
Day at *Paris*, upon credulous bigotted Women
with Child, by Virtue of a Girdle which they
call *St. Margarets*, which is kept with a religious
Care in the *Abbey of St. Germain's*; ought it to be
looked upon as a true Miracle, meerly upon the
Word of a Monk, who applies it with a great
Deal of Confidence, and pretends by it to
lessen over the hard Labour of a Woman in
Travail?

We are assured that in the first Ages of the
Church, Miracles and Prodigies were very fre-
quently wrought; as in *Africa*, in the time of
St. Augustin, by the Relicks of *St. Steven*, in *France*
by one *St. Martin*, in *Egypt* and in *Syria*, by the
Anchoret Monks. If we descend to the eleventh
and twelfth Century, tracing all their Miracles
till the 17th, and in general all those which have
been wrought since the Condemnation of *Beñen-
dictus*; above all not forgetting the Miracles of

the pretended Holy Thorn of the Port Royal, which are believed to be as well attested, as any of the rest; these Gentlemen, of as eminent a Piety, of as distinguishing Merits as any of the rest, may by their Testimony advance the Credit and Authority of those Miracles which we have cited. If they say, we are incredulous, and that we call in doubt the other Miracles which were done in the *Cevennes*, particularly that of the Fire, in Favour of *Clary*; we frankly indeed own that if we do not absolutely doubt of it; we do not at least believe it undisputable. For who can say, that all the World has received it, as sufficiently averr'd? *Durand Fage* and *John Cavalier* have indeed confirm'd it by Oath; But these Witnesses may be rejected, and their Verdict is actually confuted, both by their own Testimonies, and by the Nature of the Miracle itself, and above all, by the Testimony of *Col. Cavalier*, who has declar'd to some Persons of Quality, both in *Holland* and at *London*, since he has resided in these Places, that these are truly Impostors, and Men notorious for their Infamy in the *Cevennes*, because of their wicked Behaviour.

Col. Cavalier, being a Man of Honour and Integrity, and Illustrious for his Piety and Valour, his Testimony thereby receives the greater Weight and Esteem. Now he declares very solemnly, and maintains, that he himself assisted at the Miracle, that he saw what was done with his own Eyes, and is assured that his Eyes were not deceived. As for the two first W

nesses, we ought not to depend upon them, and I must likewise own, that the bare Testimony of Col. *Cavalier* without Proofs, is not sufficient in an Affair of so great Importance. For he might have been as credulous as those so enlightened and so devout Persons the Gentlemen of the *Port Royal*, to whose Testimony all People do not submit. And, because the Protestants of Integrity are perswaded, that all these Miracles are always false or equivocal, and that of the Fire, in favour of *Clary*, is of the same Nature, we ought not, we cannot admit of any one of them.

This is what we shall make appear, by considering the third Thing which we Proposed to speak of in this Letter, which is a serious and particular Examination of *Clary's* Miracle, in reference to the two famous Miracles mention'd in the Scripture, the Fire in the Bush, and the three *Hebrews* in the Furnace.

These two Miracles are so Particular, and Rare, that it is scarce possible to believe, or imagine, that since the Time it hath been done, there has ever been any like them, or near them in this War of Miracles. Indeed, when God appeared to *Moses* in the Bush, the Miracle with which this Apparition was accompanied, caused *Moses* to say forthwith, *I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the Bush is not burnt.* This indeed was a very wonderful sight, which the Angels beholding might be astonished at. It is true, it is no extraordinary Thing, to see green Wood escape the greediness of the Fire, and sometimes to
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extinguish it, as it very often happens, but this Experience does not lessen the Truth or Greatness of the Miracle of the burning Bush. Besides, when the Flame has really and miraculously taken hold of the Bush without consuming it, it is easie for us to discern, that the Author of Nature refuses to concur with the Power of the Fire, which for that Reason is incapable of producing its Effect upon the Bush.

To explain this mysterious Difficulty more at large, and to come nearer to our own Subject, we must add these Considerations concerning this Incapacity, which is sometimes found miraculously in Fire, even when acting upon a Subject which it might easily consume, if it was allowed its ordinary natural Course, as it happened in the burning Bush, and upon the three young *Hebrews*, who were cast into the Furnace of *Babylon*. It is easie to conceive two Things, or two Ways, by which it might happen, that the Violence of the Fire might continue without Effect, contrary to its natural Efficacy. The first consists in this, that God might suspend the Action, and restrain the Virtue of this Element: The second is, that he might Cloath the combustible Subject with such Virtue, as might resist that of the Flames, and which might be found more Powerful in the Resistance, than that of the Fire in its Attack and Violence. Thus was the Bush preserved in the middle of the Flames: Thus were the three famous *Hebrews* preserved in the Fiery Furnace. God might make use of either or both of these Ways in the working of these Miracles, and yet

get at the same time, the Fire might neither lose its Heat, nor Property of consuming. For it is ordinary to explain these Miraculous Events, by ascribing them to a suspension of Divine Concurrence. Neither have we any Reason to contradict, or reject the Observation which is expressed in the Book of *Ecclesiasticus*, which attributes the Preservation of the three *Hebrews* to a cool fresh Wind, which miraculously arising to oppose the Flames of the Furnace, made them lose their Effect; for by being intermix'd with their Hair, by blowing with gentle Breezes upon their Habits, by agreeably refreshing their Lungs, and by penetrating admirably all the Parts of their Bodies, they were thereby capable of walking without any Harm, Inconvenience, or even the Loss of a Hair; and that they likewise did very probably with a sensible Pleasure, and with so much Satisfaction and Glory in a Place, where according to all Appearance, they should have been stifled in a Moment, and reduc'd to Ashes.

At this Time, we find some Men boast of a Miracle, which was lately done in the *Cevennes*, which they pretend is in some respect equal to the two first. This Miracle is attested by two Witnesses, who call themselves Prophets. But their Testimony falls to the Ground, and they ought not to be believed, upon their Reasons which we have already mention'd. The Account they give is so ill concerted, that if we attentively consider it in all its Circumstances, common Sense will serve to discover the Falsity of it.

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Every true Miracle surpasses the Power of Man: It is the Work of God, or of those that are invested with a Divine Power. It cannot be denied, that the Miracle of the Bush and the Furnace were wrought immediately by the Almighty Power of God: 'Tis thus that *Moses* gives us his own Testimony of it. God confirms it by other Miracles, which he wrought by his Servant; and all these Circumstances together, render the Matter credible. *Moses* beheld and saw a Bush, which burned without being consumed; he saw an Angel miraculously assisting in the middle of the Bush that burn'd, and he heard a Voice which call'd to him out of the middle of the Bush; this Voice sent him to the People of *Israel*, and to *Pharaoh*. This was the Occasion and End that God proposed to himself in working this Miracle. *Moses* was so attentive, to see the Bush burning without being consum'd, that he begins to be amazed at it, and without being incredulous, he does not content himself with simply seeing it, but he proceeds to examine the Nature of it. His Eyes did not deceive him, and God gives him him more ample Testimonies of it. Every Thing here is Great, is Divine, and here are to be observ'd, all the Characters of a true Miracle. What shall we now say of the Miracle wrought in the *Cevennes*? Which has not the like Mark of a Sign, or a Prodigy, much less of a Miracle, properly speaking. And if we carefully examine the Circumstances of it, we may discover it to be false.

The Revelation of *Clary* is expressed thus;

I will that there be a Fire immediately lighted, and I say unto Thee my Child, I will suffer Thee to put thy self into the middle of the Flames, and they shall have no Power over Thee. Such Words as these, are so many Marks of a false Revelation: God himself kindles the Bush. Here he only declares his Will; *My Child I say unto Thee*; Never did the Spirit of the Prophets speak in this manner. The Spirit of the pretended Prophets say, *I will suffer Thee to put thy self into the middle of the Flames.* God Commands *Moses*, and do's not barely suffer him to go to the People of *Israel* and to *Pharoah*: he do's not leave him to his own Choice or free Will. The Expression of this Prophet is very Cold, not becoming the Dignity and Glory of God, whose Sovereign Authority is a Mark of his Infinite Power. The Revelation of the first Witness *John Cavalier* is confuted by the second Witness *Durand Fage*. The one says, *I suffer Thee to put thy self into the middle of the Flames*: the other expresses this in a more imperious style, *I will that thou put thy self into the middle of the Flames.* The Permission of God, and his effectual acting are two different Notions; this they cannot be Ignorant of. We are told by *Moses*, that the Bush burned without being consumed, an Essential Circumstance of the Miracle. We are told by the two Witnesses, that the Faggot was made up of Green Wood, which was capable of taking Fire in a Moment. This may seem to persuade us, that the Fire was not very violent: and that with some other concurring Circumstances is only a Mark of an Ordinary Fire, and
not

not of a Fire that is kindled by a Miracle. *The Bush burn'd without being consumed.* This Fire was extinguished and continued but a few Minutes. *Cavalier* says, that several Persons told him the things that *Clary* said, and at the End of his Discourse he assures us, that he saw and perceived all these things. Here are two Falsities to prove a third ; the two first destroy the last, so that there is no Truth in any of them. Who can reconcile such palpable Contradictions as these ? it is not all the Mathematicians or Philosophers in the World that can do it. He must be grossly ignorant that cou'd know, blind that cou'd see, deaf that cou'd hear all this, so as to maintain such extravagant Absurdities.

I hope it will not be taken offensively, if I here appeal to General and Colonel *Cavalier*. Heaven and Earth, and all good Men call upon them to bear Witness to the Truth : they charge their Consciences to discover all the Circumstances which attended an Affair of so great Consequence for the Glory of God, and for the Edification of the Church.

In contemplating this matter with a Serious Application of Mind, we shou'd consider a little the two Natural Senses, Seeing and Hearing, which I desire Mr. Col. *Cavalier* to take particular Notice of. Experience teaches us, that our Senses both deceive themselves and us, and they scarce ever convey any Idea or Notion to the Mind, in which there is not some Mixture of Ignorance, Doubt, and Uncertainty. Instances of what I now advance are infinite, and the Holy Scriptures furnish us with
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some of them. *Mary Magdalen* mistook *Jesus* for the *Gardner* ; *Samuel* mistook the Voice of *God*, for that of *Eli* the Priest ; *Isaac* mistook *Jacob* for *Esau*. We have therefore good Reason not to confide always in the Sight or Hearing.

I know *St. Augustin* says in the Tenth Book of his *Confessions* ; *Chap. 35. ad oculos propriè*, meaning that all the Objects in the World are under the Empire of the Eyes, the Ears, and all the Senses. Which is farther confirmed by some other Words of the same Father, in his 147th Sermon *de Tempore*, where he says, *That the perfect Rule of Faith, is the continued Habit of seeing.*

Upon these words of *St. Augustin*, I do observe these two Things. The first is, that a sudden cloudy and strange Humour, may accidentally fall upon the Eyes, and trouble them to such a Degree, that one may, tho' but for a very short Time, lose the faculty of seeing Objects, such as they naturally appear to be, which at another, the Eyes are very fitly dispos'd to discern distinctly and truly after this Eclipse of the Sight is over. The second Observation is taken from the Witness, who deposed, that he saw and perceiv'd ; but he contradicts himself in another Place, in saying, *That he saw and perceiv'd*, since he knew nothing, but by the Report of another, *that Clary did speak.* For *my Part*, says *John Cavalier*, *I cou'd not apprehend distinctly, and they tell me, that it was himself that put Fire to the Wood : And he adds, That every one saw him in the middle of the Flames.* He does

does not say, that he was one of those that saw or perceived it.

There is a general Distinction allowed of by all sorts of People, between an ocular Witness, and one that is a Witness purely by Hear-say. The last is but allowed a small degree of Credit and Authority in the Evidence which he gives. This is the Condition of our Witness; and therefore it is no wonder, if we have a Subject of doubting; and we can never be justly condemned for an unreasonable Curiosity, if we are willing to examine all the Circumstances of an Affair of so great consequence, that we may discover to the Bottom the Truth of a dubious Miracle, both by him that Proposes it, and by those to whom it is Proposed. For it is possible, that Men may endeavour to make such pass for true Miracles, which are only the Phantoms and Delusions of some depraved Spirits.

Let us now enter upon an Examination of the second Miracle of the Furnace, which we have already mentioned; let us view it in all its Circumstances, to see if it can be any way compared with that of *Clary*. It was a Furnace set on Fire in seven Places, into which three young Men were cast, to be destroyed by the Flames. The Miracle in the *Cavernes* was wrought upon dry light Wood, which cou'd only cast forth some light Flames, mix'd with thick Smoak, as we often find by Experience upon such combustible Matter, where there is more of green than dry Wood. Here were three young *Jews* who were to suffer the Fire, upon Account of their Religion; there only a young Man was

pass through the Fire, to render a certain pretended Revelation authentick ; and as it appear'd by several Tokens, that the Revelation did not come from God ; it might be reasonably thought, that *Clary's* Miracle was only a Chimera. The three *Hebrews* sang a most eloquent Song, in Praise of the Glcry and Power of God, faithfully collected and annexed to the Holy Scriptures. The young Man *Clary* spoke, as it is said, in the middle of the Flames, as one Inspired ; but it was not known what he said ; God was not glorified, nor the People edified by it. The Three *Hebrews* walked in in the middle of the Furnace at full Liberty. Our *Genevieve* stood upright in the burning Faggot, altogether immoveable, or if he did move, it was, say they with violent Agitations. Lastly, the Three *Hebrews* were seen in the middle of the Devouring Flames, and besides them there was seen a Fourth, which was the Son of God in the Form of an Angel, walking with them : The Tyrant himself who was present at the Celebration of this Miracle being quite astonished gave them Praise : As for our inspired Man, it is only said, that every one saw him alone in the middle of the Flames, with which he was all covered and surmounted, with this farther Circumstance related by Mr. *Misson*, that all that were present seeing him in the Flames stood aghast and full of Dread, lest he might be destroyed by the Flames. Which is contradicted by another Circumstance already mentioned, that the Flames surmounted and covered him, from whence we may with

Reason conclude that the Flames and Smoak hiding him out of their Sight, they cou'd not judge whether *Clary* was alive or stifled, and if they had firmly believed the Miracle they wou'd not have fall'n into any such Horrour and Dread, as to make them cry out that he wou'd be destroyed by the Flames. So that if we thoroughly examine all the Circumstances, we can scarce imagine that such light Flames cou'd be able to cover *Clary's* whole Body, or reach some Fathoms above his Head. All this both in one and the other Part, ought to perswade us, that the Miracle is marked with an Evident Falsity. Besides, the Fire being almost extinct a little after it was lighted, the rest of the Wood which made up the Faggot, was so scattered about, that there was none of it remaining, which was not burnt by the care of those that put it together, without any Order either from Mr. *Cavalier* the Commander of the Troop, or any other Person.

As for Mr. *Cavalier*, who says that he was that Day upon the Guard, ought not he to have made a particular inspection into an Affair of which he was one Day to give an account to the Publick, with all its Circumstances. I hope he will now do it, as also in Relation to many other things of this Nature. This Circumstance is remarkable in the Confession of Mr. *Cavalier* himself, that the Faggot being raised up to the height of a Pike, it was easy to believe, that the Flames of the Faggot wou'd reach above *Clary's* height. But neither Conscience and Reason allow us to believe, that

since the Faggot was made only of Green Wood which was very dry and light, according to Mr. *Misson's* Fabulous History, it could be possibly raised up to the height of a Pike, without employing upon it some longer Time than a Moment, as the Historian reports. This again is contradicted by the Words of *Durand Fage*, who assures us *That General Cavalier ordered them after several Delays, to go seek for Wood, and to make a Fire quickly, and that then they gathered some dry Wood with Bushes, which they piled up in a Moment.* It seems, then they were not long upon it, to build up the Faggot to the height of a Pike. A second Contradiction is, that supposing *Clary* did put himself into the middle of the burning Faggot, by what means could he do it, without ruining the Fabrick and Order in which they had piled up the Faggot, because it is necessary that all these Materials shou'd be bound together, in Order to make them stand upright, otherwise the whole Edifice would shake, and it might happen that Poor *Clary* might be burned or stifled, under the Ruins of the Faggot.

In short, it is highly unreasonable to say, that *Clary* was preserved in the Fire, by the same extraordinary Favour with which the three *Hebrews* were preserved, that is by God's Concurrence, in suspending or destroying the Power of the Fire, or in enduing *Clary* with a Power to resist the Flames; or as the Author of *Ecclesiasticus* says, *That a cool fresh Wind arising miraculously resisted the Flames of the Furnace.* But, if the Wind did blow upon *Clary*, it must be own'd, that considering the Disposition of

the Place where the Faggot was set up, and kindled, and where he plac'd himself, it was extremely favourable to him; for tho' he was quite surrounded with Smoke, yet he was not in the least touched by the Flames, which were over-power'd with so thick a Smoke, that he was quite hid from the Eyes of the Spectators. *Durand Fage* deposes one particular which weakens, and at the same time goes beyond his own Evidence; *The Fire was lighted, but I do not know, whether it was Clary himself that lighted it.* He adds, *As soon as the Flames begun to rise, he entred into the middle, holding himself up right, and having his Hands join'd together, and raised.* He did not see how the Fire was lighted, but he saw as soon as the Flames begun to rise, that he entred into the middle. This does not well agree with what he says afterwards; *I did not take Care to observe what he said, since, besides the 600 Men that were in the Front, there were about as many more Persons of all Ages and Sexes, who were come from the Neighbouring Villages, and which altogether made a large Ring about the Fire;* says *Mr. Missen* in his History. From whence we may draw this Observation, that *Fage* was at a good distance from the Faggot, and consequently had no good Opportunity to view him, and that all the People to the Number of 1200, undoubtedly hindered him to see how *Clary* entred into the middle of the Flames; besides, that the Place where the Faggot was set, was low, and the People got upon the highest Places. He adds farther, *That Clary was all that Time in an Extasy, with his Hands join'd together, and*
raised

ed up, and that he spoke. Now, these last
 ds are less favourable to *Durand Fage's* De-
 , and likewise contrary to the Nature and
 ality of Extasies, which bind up the Senses,
 render the whole Body incapable of Acti-

These Words likewise contain a manifest
 Contradiction to those which were said
 re, that *Clary* was in violent Agitations.

One Place alone of *St. Augustin*, in his Book
 the Unity of the Church, comprehends, in
 , all those Truths which I have here en-
 your'd to explain. Give me leave, Sir, to
 tion it to you, with which I shall con-
 e. *St. Augustin*, speaking of Prodigies,
 s and Miracles, that are apt to deceive, in-
 bly confutes that of *Clary's*, by the Marks
 are given of it. *Let them not tell me of*
Things, which are either Stories made at Plea-
Men, who carry on a Design to deceive the
, or which are Prodigies wrought by the Power
Devil, who seeks to deceive, or with which
would play upon us by false Relations. Qui
decipi decipiat.

I am

SIR,

Your very humble Servant

L. V. M.

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